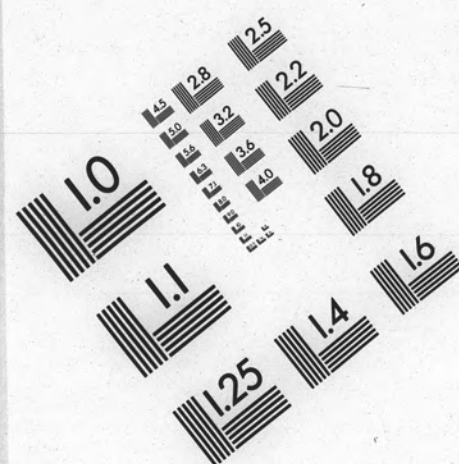


**Journal, 1960.**

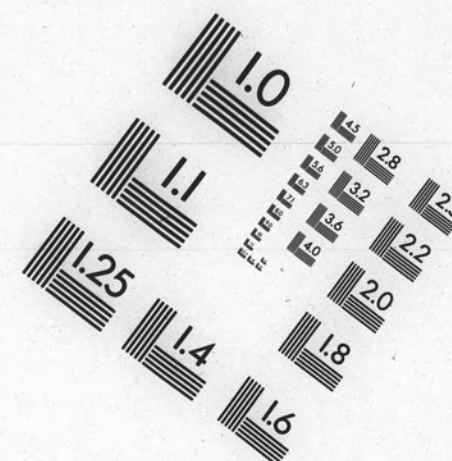




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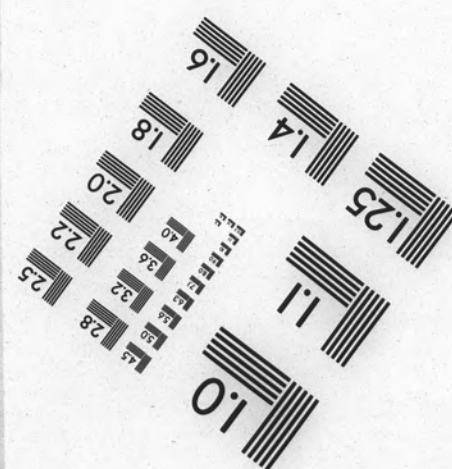
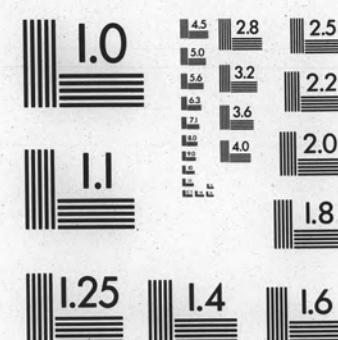
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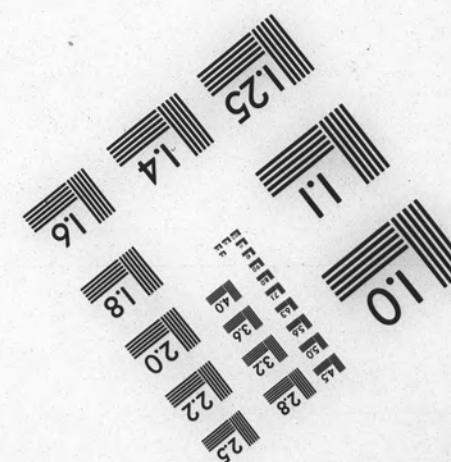
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10284

JOURNAL OF FRANCOIS MIGNON

- 1960 -

88501

10285

Friday, January 1st, 1960.

Memorandum:

Continued cloudy and sprinkley.

Christmas was duplicated by New Years, all quiet and just as I would have it. One doesn't have too many of such and I'm grateful to God for this holiday season and I hold the thought some measure of the same may have obtained in the Lyme area.

Lots of plantation people who failed to make it to Yucca on Christmas made up for lost time tonight, this afternoon and this morning. As I was quite alone, the numerous visitors were doubly welcome. Next week will be so busy that I shall have little time for others than out of State visitors and so I am delighted to have got 1960 off to such a pleasant start locally.

I was especially happy at the way last night and 1959 played out. My musical stressed Feyer favorites and I somehow found Echo from the Italian section particularly to my frame of mind. As you know, I have always preferred being alone of New Year's Eve and so it was last night. I knocked off quite a lot of work and then went in the musicale, after which I devoted the final two hours of the decade to reverie, counting my blessing of 1959 and praising God for same. Then, after that, I resumed my musicale to get the New Year going and was so pleasantly sleepy when I finally turned and really slept the sleep of the just.

I am sure the rain of last night must have made driving to New Orleans unpleasant enough for J. H. and I gather the weather was little better for today's L. S. U. --Old Miss game. I had neither the inclination nor the time to tune in on the afternoon broadcast of the game but at 10 o'clock I was impressed to learn that Old Miss had won without L. S. U. ever having scored a single point. I assume people who attended a game, hoping that their side may win and, if so, there must have been lots of disappointed speculators from the Pelican State. I shall be hearing all about that on the morrow.

.....



28801

10286

00961, 1960, 1960, 1960

MEMORANDUM

Continued from previous page

Celeste, Joe and Juanita dined with me at the big house this noon, immediately after which Celeste flew out for town where she remains all night for her mother on the theory that J. H. will be late in getting home and she is afraid to stay by herself. Imagine. Joe and Juanita got off right after dinner, too, and I told the cook to take the rest of the day off which seemed to make her very happy. I like it when I can dine by myself at Yucca when I please and that is just what I did tonight.

I was sorry to learn tonight of the death of Margaret Sullivan. I never saw her but almost felt as though she were an acquaintance, having heard Miss Cammie mention her so often with affection for she had been a Melrosian before I ever ventured into this region.

I was so happy to learn today that the daughter of Felix Johnson and sister of Alton, the mechanical wizard, is returning to her school in Baton Rouge on Sunday. She is in appearance about the size of Zelma but has a telephone personality suggesting a little girl of about 15 and is the manipulator of a speech that would put to shame the most ultra refined of the fanciest finishing school pupil in the United States or England. Her real name is Shirley but I call her "the Kitten", her mee-ow is so remarkably feline. By some appeal which I cannot imagine, she sets all the youths in the Parish jumping and the Johnson telephone rings constantly, meaning that mine does, too, since we are on the same party line. The Kitten has a way of making every youth believe he is the only object of her affections and scads of them are buzzing about constantly like bees around a dab of spilled sugar. I write these lines at 11 and there have been at least half a dozen Johnson calls since I set hand to paper. Life is going to seem to quiet after the Kitten departs and a new sensation will be mine when I am again able to make an out-going or receive an in-coming call without encountering a series of "Mee-ows....."

28801

10287

Sunday, January 3rd, 1960.

Memorandum: Cold and clear with a promise of ice on the morrow.

It has been such a quiet, peaceful week end, I must say I have enjoyed it fully as much and perhaps a little more than the entire holiday week which was pleasant enough but not so quiet as today has been.

Last night I did a little reading from Wisdom, the Talmud Book collection of the NBC broadcasts and, among other points, I was delighted to hear Edith Hamilton expound her appreciation of the ancient Greeks. As the recording was originally made at Bar Harbor, one heard the swish of the sea, sometimes almost too loud for clear reception of the voices but the major part of the message came through clearly enough. I was especially delighted with her merriment in explaining that she learned the facts of life when her father, forgetting she was well versed in Latin, gave her Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, forgetting about the juicy footnotes in Latin.

Sometimes early on Sunday morning I fish around in the air waves until I find something that promises a good sermon and sometimes I just let the radio rock along without searching for anything. His morning I chanced to be on NBC Atlanta and let the Baptist gentleman rock along, too, although I awakened more completely when I began to realize just what point he was trying to make which turned out to be a matter on which I had never given much thought. He went to considerable trouble to explain that while most people think an oyster can be no bigger than the shell in which it is encased, modern man has been able to create oysters, pearls of any size he pleases and therefore, since God can outdo anything man can do, God can most certainly make pearls as big as He wants to and, therefore when the Bible refers to "the perlarly gates", we must remember that God indeed can make a gate of solid pearl, no matter how big the afore-gate may be, and that is that. Imagine cluttering up the air waves with such clap trap over a first rate net work for such tomfoolery.



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Ora called this morning and I was certainly glad to talk with her. Apparently everything is still quiet in the wake of Mrs. Williams' death for nothing was mentioned as to any untoward performances on the part of Beth. Ora said that she had given up her plans for Europe and Oxford this year because Ann's new house is needing lots of things. She said she was not disposing of studying at Oxford entirely, however, and thought she might undertake it next year. I hope she does.

I had talked with Ann on Saturday afternoon. She said the Richard Pratts had 'phoned the hamber of ommerce on Saturday morning, saying they had not heard from Hita Sutton and asked Ann to make reservations for them locally for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of this week, requesting her at the same time to get in touch with me for an appointment on one of those three days. Ann understood that the Pratts have a two-fold purpose in coming into the Cane River country, first, for Architect Pratt to further his work on Architecture, and second, Frau Partt has in mind to do a magazine article. I got around to explore some more Christmas presents today and discovered I had guessed wrong as to the contents of at least one package. Dolly Walmsley, as long as I can remember, has always had some San Antonio store send me a fruit cake. This year's box, from the outside, looked like all the others but when I opened it, I was quite taken aback to discover 8 or 10 different loafs of bread, seemingly all of different varieties. I pinched a few of them and concluded it would be better to await the morrow to find out what is what. Off hand it would appear that Emmet and Erwin are on the verge of having quite a picnic but perhaps further examination will reveal some hitch in the matter. It would seem odd writing a thank you note to acknowledge receipt of several loafs of bread but perhaps there is really something new in the Christmas wrinkle after all. I enjoyed the Paul Butler appearance on Fance the Nation tonight and thought I was going to relish the CBS round of of news for 1959 but in the latter I found nothing surprisingly new or informative. Celeste says her mama appears brighter and more interested in things today and I am glad. It's a little late but I simply have to have a dab of Feyer, especially the Intalian Echo section before calling it a day.....

10289

10289

Monday, January 4th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and cold but no sign of the ice that was promised since the 25 degrees threatened for last night slid down only to 37. I hope it does the same thing tonight.

Celeste remained in bed today, her stomach being upset.

I remained in the bamboo most of the day, the influx of the first waves of birds having already broken down so many stalks. One can imagine how things wont look when the full flood of the migrations arrive within a couple of weeks. Fortunately, today's breezes came from the east so that the hedges to west and north had their aroma wafted in the direction of the Bermuda road which the artist and her neighbors didn't seem to like so much.

And speaking of the artist, she must be pretty hard pressed by her boy friend and her scoundrel mulato cronies, Marie and Peet Morin for the latter persuaded her to go to town today to apply for a loan from some finance company. What any of them thought she could raise without collateral, I wouldn't know. The artist called me from home this afternoon, asking for a conference at the fence. I met her and she explained that she wanted money but that the finance company couldn't let her have any unless she could get someone to sign with her and she expressed the hope that I would. Imagine. And so "Pa" who wants the artist to get a new car for their common use and more whiskey because he prefers corn to the grape, must remain up a tree, I fear. I find it wonderful what the glamor of the mulatto coloring can exert on such a tight fisted, hard headed individual as the artist. Like a child, she needs parental protection from getting into perilous places, financially, or would need such protection if she had any money which she hasn't, what with Joe Ben Metoyer having sopped up all her earnings during the pst couple of years. The artist has had fun all along the way and it was probably as good an investment as could be expected under the circumstances but it is a pity to see her taken for such a ride.



88S01

10290

Last night I heard a couple of re-broadcasts that interested me much, --following my mild interest in the review of the year's news events which had held little of novelty or new information. From Chicago came a 2 or 3 hour discussion of manifestations in all branches of endeavor, including literature, theatre, science, design and so on. The Editor of the Atlantic Monthly spoke for literature. He had found no outstanding novels. He liked a look about Queen Elizabeth, the 1st, by whom I know not and the James Thurber autobiography, "Life with---somebody,--whose name I didn't catch.

Then I moved from Chicago to New Orleans where the columbia station WWL, did one of the most interesting programs I have heard in a long time with a man whose name throughout eluded me. The man was the leader, I guess the founder, of the original Dixie Land Jazz Band, and, I suppose, a negro. It was the Dixieland Jazz Band that had its inception in New Orleans, journeyed to Chicago, to New York and to London, introducing jazz bands to Broadway in an over night success and repeating the introduction to Europe through the instant success the band had in London. Several of the original band's records were sprinkled through the program, including such old stand-byes as Tiger Rag, etc. What I think perfectly remarkable is the fact that the leader and organizer of this band and every one of the members of which I suppose there were half a dozen New Orleans negroes, --not one of these members of the band, including its leader had ever had any formal musical training and not a single one of them could read a note. I doubt if any band in the world ever had such a success under such adverse circumstances. The old leader who now lives in New Orleans and was described as being "house ridden" probably meaning "bed ridden", mentioned that on arriving in New York from Chicago, he found he had only a few pieces, perhaps 2 or 3, that were new although he had a contract for a dozen new pieces to be recorded for Victor. He would go to Central Park and listen to the band concerts and find enough basic melodies to supply him with jazz material to create the required number of pieces, employing tunes he could not identify, such as Listz, Secor Hungarian, Sousa's Stars and Stripes and so on. It seems to me these two and London Bridge is Falling Down were the frame work for a single piece that had an enormous success. One always wonders to what heights some of the people might have traveled if they had had but the rudiments of musical instruction. I suppose the Dixieland Jazz Band was the most popular band in the world in the 1920's, the rage of Europe and America and what team work as one realizes not one of them could read a note. Lordy, Lord, what a business.....

88S01

10291

Tuesday, January 5th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Still cloudy and cold and still drizzling.

This must be the week when the usual 13 week programs get confirmed, thrown out or changed about, while the politicians confuse the air waves, too, by pushing off likely presentations in favor of the usual tiresome claptrap.

Governor Long announced today that he had just cast his absentee ballot and that Jimmy Davis received his vote. That, from such a source, ought to strike terror to anyone seeking a majority vote on Saturday but whether it turns out to be a "kiss of death", only the returns will tell.

It appears the Davis forces must have made a deal for endorsement with Earl Long since, I learned on excellent authority at supper, that Earl had been mighty busy this afternoon telephoning people all around the State to vote of Jimmy Davis.

Ann called me this afternoon and said Jack would be too depressed for words if Davis failed in the election. Jack is spear-heading the Davis ticket in this area. Be it remembered that Jack Britton is a junior partner in Watson, Williams and Britton and, in this instance at least, is carrying out with gusto the instructions received from his senior partner, Cousin Arthur. The latter is leaving it to Jack to beat the drum for Davis while Cousin Arthur himself endorses neither candidate in order that, if Davis wins, he can claim his law firm's support of the new Governor, whereas, if Morrison wins, Cousin Arthur can point with pride to the fact that he, himself, never supported the crooner. It all sounds so political and so "Heads, I win, --tails you lose".



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Thanks to the inclemency of the weather, I  
got a lot of stuff done indoors, including an attack on  
a flock of Christmas presents I hadn't gone into yet. The  
real work that I should have done on this machine never got  
touched but I am glad I made a dent in some of the trash  
that has been gathering too long.

I even did a little reading between supper and  
news time and I liked what I read, --an interview with  
Lord Russell. It seems remarkable, in a way, although  
quite understandable, that a man now living, brought up  
by his grandfather, should be able to point out that  
that grandfather had been born during the French Revolution  
and, after having been a member of Parlement while Napoleon was  
on the throne, had visited Bonaparte while the latter was at Elba..  
Somehow it all seemed to carry me back to my old friend, Robert Bacon  
of Church Hill who for years had been a neighbor of William Johnson  
who, as a University of Virginia student, used to be the  
dinner partner of Monticello's original owner, Thomas Jefferson.

I suppose I am pretty much alone on the  
plantation so far as the garden section is con-  
cerned for J. H. left early this morning for New Orleans,  
Atlanta and Birmingham. He is chairman of the  
Market Board of Louisiana and this trip appears to be a flying  
junker to Georgia and Alabama to see what they have  
done with city markets before the Louisiana  
board O. K.'s the somewhat extensive plans made  
for a new market in the Crescent City. I  
hasten to say that I am glad that although there is to be a

10291

10293

Wednesday, January 6th, 1950.

Memorandum: The black and white photo of the  
Chilly and drizzly.. but no kidding  
If you have already glanced at the enclosure, you  
will agree with me, I'm sure, that acknowledgements can  
be brief, this one achieves some sort of a record.  
The Rocket called this afternoon from Hatchitoches.  
She said her Aunt Hortense and a load of furniture were  
traveling with her to 511 St. Ann and that she expected to  
be in the Crescent City for a week. She said she and  
her brother had decided to retain the Marsall house for a while  
at least and that there had been a mutual satisfactory division  
of the property. She said that she thought the  
movie, --"one or the other", --and I know not what that  
means, was scheduled for release on the 26th and the  
28th. I guess the call was made  
around 3 and it was explained that as they were trying to  
reach New Orleans tonight, they would not be able to pass this  
way. That I could understand, --October, November,  
December and January, as it were.

Celeste is spending the next three nights in town with her  
mama. She said she might come down during the day, but  
she wasn't certain on that point, what with various  
social demands to be taken care of in town.  
I suppose I am pretty much alone on the  
plantation so far as the garden section is con-  
cerned for J. H. left early this morning for New Orleans,  
Atlanta and Birmingham. He is chairman of the  
Market Board of Louisiana and this trip appears to be a flying  
junker to Georgia and Alabama to see what they have  
done with city markets before the Louisiana  
board O. K.'s the somewhat extensive plans made  
for a new market in the Crescent City. I  
hasten to say that I am glad that although there is to be a



10294

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quite spiffy new city market, the Old French Market  
is nevertheless being retained.

The black cat sleeps on a board under the bench on the front  
gallery and when Andy was helping me with some things  
being placed on the bench this afternoon, I  
pointed out to him that I had placed a wooden basket under  
the bench, a round one, in which the cat might  
fold up himself for greater warmth since he would just fit into  
it and the sides were high enough to keep off the cold, damp  
breezes. A minute or two later, Andy remarked that the  
cat was asleep in the basket and a few seconds later announced  
that "the cat have unwoke". I am  
forever being delighted by such new words and "unwoke" is one  
I am bound to cherish. I finished the interview with Lord Russell in the Wisdom  
volume last night and was impressed by his notion that  
among the three more important things the world would be  
needing just ahead would be

1st, a Federal Government of the world, leaving  
to individual nations almost everything except the matter  
of military matters, and

2nd, an equalizing of economies for all the nations, and

3rd, some control of the birth rate, on the theory that  
the world cannot produce enough food for too many people.  
I think there is an error in this assumption for I  
gather surpluses are fairly easy to attain if one sets a bout  
it, as does the United States. But I do think some  
"planned family" notion an excellent and inevitable one.

And now for a dab of work, followed, perhaps, by  
a dab of "Wisdom" or a musicale, --the same thing.....

10295

10295

Thursday, January 7th, 1960.

Memorandum: Cooland sunny today and clear and moony tonight.

And what a pleasant day it has been, thanks to the  
mail from Lyme.

I am bubbling over with delight at the news that  
a gap between the neighboring hearths has been closed, not  
so tightly, perhaps, as formerly, but sufficiently bridged to  
enable the distaff sides to negotiate the chasm that had  
yawned so unpleasantly.

Naturally, I was delighted with the fine portrait of Mr. Hamil  
The service mentioned in the letter and the accompanying clipping  
suggests a splendid service. My machine rolls at  
the rate of 33 and a third revolutions per minute but,  
like the Santa Claus radio, it seems to have a flock of  
gadgets whose purposes I have never explored and one  
of these things, I believe, is a speed knob that both  
increases speed when desired and reduces it below the 33 and a third  
when called upon to do so. Because I am not adept  
at attaining anything by fooling a round with  
mechanical push buttons and knobs whose reason for being I do not  
understand, I am consulting the man who occasionally  
gives the machine a going over. It is quite  
possible he will be able to tell me about this by  
telephone as he is well acquainted with the present machine.  
I tried to get in touch with him immediately after reading  
the message concerning the Times item but he was out on  
business and so I shall try him again in the morning, and, if  
the machine is all geared for such adjustments, I shall  
subscribe without delay to this wonderful medium  
that will provide me with so much additional data on what goes  
on in the world. I cannot tell you how delighted  
I am to know all about this potential and how  
touched I am by the subscription that has been so thoughtfully  
be supplied by my lady of the lamp.



10296

10296

It goes without saying that I am glad the publication you mentioned as having arrived turned out to be alright. I am so sorry that it was such a cumbersome business to be dragged from one place to another.

Ann W. Britton 'phoned me this morning a little after 9 to report she had just received another call from the Pratts, still at Hot Springs. It seems there was a heavy snowfall in that area and it was impossible for them to get their car into the big road and so they will not touch this region before tomorrow. She asked Ann if she thought an appointment with me could be arranged for Saturday afternoon and Ann responded in the negative and was quite right, what with Saturday being election which is just another way of saying the wrong people will be here, or the wrong person will be here from 6 a.m. until 8 p.m. But Mrs. Pratt opined to Ann that if Saturday couldn't be effected, she imagined that Sunday might be better and so that Ann concurred and so did I. My neighbors, across the fence wouldn't even be here, although that wouldn't matter, for usually I am quite alone on the Sabbath as between 1 and 7 p.m. I had a few calls today from one person or another who liked the Tea Leaf and Pole Cat thing. As I haven't had a chance to read the thing slap through, I am quite sure that my impression, while jotting it down, was that it could have been pepped up, whittled down and generally improved but, as I had no opportunity to give it a once over, no it must, like the others, stand as it is, the rough draft of a manuscript, whacked off in the dark. The influx of birds increases in numbers from evening to evening. The vast flocks of them would darken the sun, were it not already set behind the Montrose hills before they begin winging in in vast phalanxes that deploy their forces in groups of thousands with a precision of movement and beauty of line that is remarkable. They are best viewed from the Yucca gallery for when returning from feeding the borer, I find an old raincoat the only guarantee of staying off incredible cleaning bills.....

10297

10297

Friday, January 8th, 1950.

Memorandum:

A lovely day, a lovely night. I had coffee across the fence this morning and Pere Antoine whom neither Celeste nor I had seen for several days, was present, too. Celeste had attended an Hysterical Ladies gathering at the old Lemee House. She said that she and all the others present had been surprised and delighted when Thelma, as President, read a letter from me and a Christmas card to the old Lemee House accompanying a brass fleur de lis door knocker. They followed a wonderful line: "It was immediately agreed that a Committee should be appointed at once to supervise the placing of the knocked on the front door."

The Committees in the past have done some wonderful work but it struck me this was stretching the point a little when one had to appoint a Committee to get a piece of hardware tacked on a door. Smile.

Ann called me in the morning to say she had had a telephone from the Richard Pratts, somewhere along the road between Hot Springs and Hatchitoches. They estimated they would reach town about 3:30 or 4 and asked if they might visit Melrose on Saturday, as they would be leaving for Hatchitoches on Saturday afternoon. She told they she thought it impossible but would inquire. I told her she had been so right. I thought, however, that the visit might be squeezed in somehow and so I 'phoned them



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at the Louisianne motel around 6 this evening and suggested they make a little go-round by moonlight. They thought that would be a good idea and asked when it would be convenient. I suggested 7 o'clock but they wanted to rest and so we compromised on 8.

The sky was lovely and the moon so bright that they could easily comprehend what I pointed out for them to see. Although they incline toward interiors, it was odd that they were impressed by the exterior of the African House they didn't manifest much interest in the interior and didn't even bother to show them the upper floor.

At Yucca we had a prolonged session and it was after midnight before they announced they had to get on their way and I did not restrain them. I think they liked what they had seen but, naturally enough, what they heard in the whir of a million wings probably impressed them most because they had never before witnessed such a concentration of birds before.

I didn't learn much from them because it seemed to me but fair to give them what they were down this way for, --some knowledge of the region. I was much interested in their description of a fine property outside of Philadelphia, I believe they said in Buck Country, Pennsylvania. The estate is called Andalusia, is Greek revival, and was the country seat of Nicholas Biddle, annotator of the Lewis Journals of the Lewis and Clark expedition, and bitter foe of Andrew Jackson over the Bank of the United States. If I ever find myself in that area, I should like to have a look at Andalusia, no secret wouldn't you. Mr. Pratt is perhaps 65 and has a few personality points reminding me vaguely of Dr. Butler. Vaguely, his wife who mentioned that she was Jewish and hailed from Rochester, New York, put me in mind on the pleasant side of Madam General but with more gray matter.

And so the 1960 holiday of the Battle of New Orleans comes to a close and Election Day has already arrived and I must grab a dab of sleep before the new dawn.....

10299

10299

Sunday, January 10th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and warm with a promise of rain for the morrow.

The Louisiana electorate spoke yesterday in no uncertain terms and Jimmy Davis won by 70 or 80 thousand votes. "People get the Government they deserve" and the hillbillies, racial and religious bigots got exactly what they deserved. My guess is that we are in for four years of drifting, so far as the Executive is concerned, and I assume the big money boys will call all the tunes.

On the Alexandria front, I am glad for Blythe's sake, and, of course, for Ed Rand that he was successful in winning his race for the Louisiana House of Representatives.

I was rummaging around on the front gallery this afternoon when the lady doctor, Desiree, and some lady appeared. The lady doctor apologized for bringing a December 25th gift on January 10th and I returned the apology by doing the same to her.

After taking one casual glance at my expanding waist line, she recommended the loss of about 25 pounds. I doubled her figure and allowed as how I had in mind to drop about 50. A couple of months back when contending with a dab of influenza, I had no difficulty at all in thinning down considerably but when the Christmas foods began rolling my way, I seem to have been able to slap on a ton or two with equal facility.

I inquired about Madam Regard. She said that physically she is doing alright but she feels there's a tendency toward mental exhaustion that tends to make her appear to be slowing up in her otherwise natural recuperation.



00201

10300

I really enjoyed my Saturday night with the reading machine instead of the radio with its endless compilations of election returns from all 65 Parishes of the State. Once, along about midnight, I thought I wanted to go to bed but having arrived there, decided I still wanted to read a bit more and so ended up by finishing "Years with Ross". I must say I think Thurber has turned out a good book and it was only through a note at the end of the volume that I realized that Thurber has apparently lost his sight.

I can not see why I am so surprised to have learned for the first time that James T. Cane was once a New Yorker editor. I have always thought the New Yorker had some of the finest bits of writing one was likely to find in the metropolitan assortment of magazines. I must say, however, that I never got as much of a kick out of the New Yorker cartoons, especially those of Thurber and Peter Arno as did many of my contemporaries. Their captions generally struck me as both pat and perfect and, withal, hilarious. As for the drawings themselves, however, I must say they never struck a chord or a depth of merriment for me that they always seemed to evoke in others. There must be something lacking in my ability to appreciate certain forms of the cartoonists' art as I am quite incapable of enjoying equally, say, all the French Impressionist school with equal fervor. In the latter category I never seem to tire of Renoir and Manet whereas if I never saw another Toulouse-Lautrec or a Matisse, if, indeed, the latter can be bracketed as being in that category. I must ponder on this point sometime to see what I can make of it for, I must confess, I don't recall ever having heard anyone else complain about the Peter Arno drawings and, therefore, I must assume that my reaction to their seeming lack of finish never seemed to worry anyone else.

I found this week's issue of Life especially interesting, especially some of the pictures of Mr. Eisenhower's travels in Spain and Morocco, the Shah's wedding, etc., etc., and I am looking forward to next Saturday's copy and the account of contemporary doings in Ghana which, I gather, must be on the ragged edge of the political upheavals awaiting many of the emerging African countries, so pitifully unprepared to go it alone. And tomorrow I am looking forward to finding out about my reading machine and the proper speed for the times piece.

00201

10301

Monday, January 11th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A lovely day, as incredibly sunny and warm as one encounters almost anywhere between here and Lyme every once in a number of years, come January. It was so pleasant to labor in short sleeved sport shirt all day and to have all doors and windows open this evening.

I called Ann this morning to congratulate her and her husband on the success of their favorite candidate, Davis. I asked her if she had ever seen anything more of the Pratts and she said she had for a brief moment at 10:10 on Saturday morning when they appeared at the Chamber of Commerce. It seems she had made an appointment for them at Beaufort for 10 o'clock and knew Beth would be in a panic if they weren't on time. She said she had made another appointment for them for Oakland at 11.

No sooner had I hung up the phone than Beth called me to ask me how I liked the Pratts. She said they fell in love with Beaufort and remained from 10:15 until 11:30. All I can say is that the Pratts must move fast if they made it from the Chamber of Commerce in town down to Beaufort in five minutes.

Beth told me the Pratts were leaving for Hatcher on Saturday afternoon and from there would go to St. Francisville to look over Rosedown. Beth asked me if I knew who owned Rosedown and who was doing it over. I lied and said I didn't. Conversations with Beaufort are always too long even if just Beth herself does the talking and as I already knew what I knew, there was no point in prolonging the rigamarole.

Beth rattled along at a great rate and before she got through, reported that she intended going to Baton Rouge this coming week end and proposed stopping off at Rosedown on the way. I was just as glad I had not the names of the people who now own the place and the New Orleans architects who are doing it over.



10301

10302

10301, 10302, 10303

Thanks to the disappearance of the monopoly of the air waves by the politicians, Invitation to Learning re-appeared again tonight for the first time in too long. The subject was The Poems of Edgar Allen Poe about whom I learned nothing new. When the radio audience gets a little more mature or when it makes its maturity a little more felt, perhaps some station may have the courage to put on a week poetry hour in which a couple of people will discuss an author and his work and give a few excerpts, sandwiched in between the biographical and critical discussion.

I gather from tonight's symposium that Poe's poetry introduced symbolism, whatever that is, to literature, but as his poems were of no account or mighty little, they must must thank Baudelaire for having translated them into French and so made them better.

Tonight's discussion was in a way like the report of clinical report by brain surgeons, following an examination of the brain cells of a Quatorze or a Bonaparte, the summation being that, even as in the case of a da Vinci or a Mozart laboratory examination of the gray matter, there really wasn't anything remarkable about such characters or their works. If the Poe poems may be transformed into human form and tonight's panel into the role of a surgeon, I suppose one might contort an over worked phrase by opining that "the operation was not a success but the patient survived".

Last night, while listening to the New Orleans WWL program about contemporary jazz and an interview with Al Hirsch, I came to the conclusion that something had happened at WWL between the time they wrote me last Friday and when they went on the air Sunday night. In their Friday letter, they said that a transcript of the preceeding Sunday night's program could be made by a secretary employed for such a job if I thought it would be worth while to me. Last night, they referred to comment the program had elicited and announced that, in view of a suggestion, a transcription was being made and that listeners would be supplied same gratis on request. So turn the dials and so I must turn to some neglected desk work, ere folding.....

10301

10303

10301, 10302, 10303  
Tuesday, January 12th, 1960.

Memorandum: Cloudy and too warm. A cold front is promised for the morrow, bringing thunder storms when the cold air hangs up against the warm flow of clouds from the Gulf.

Fugabou and Cooley were on my doorstep early this morning to ask for instructions about diskling the Ghana garden.

I am delighted to have this work done and tomorrow I shall probably transplant a flock of trees, now that the tractors have had their go at things. Today was devoted almost exclusively to charting out the places where trees will appear shortly, fences will be erected to support vines this summer and pathways that will combine neatly, I hope, in making the approach to Ghana pretty.

I coffee-ed across the fence this morning and found the lady quite satisfied with the world. She had lingered until 9 to chat a little and after that proposed to dash in to town to see mother before she, herself, went on for an afternoon at the country club. The world is so full of such an interesting collection of country clubbers, and only time has been too long since last the social butterflies had a complete quorum.

I was pretty happy, too, not so much for country club reasons but for the more mundane delight of getting several loads of decomposing fine sawdust from the former saw mill in the Montrose area, now local property. Sawdust of this quality is so hard to come by the its arrival in such generous quantities represented quite a windfall for would-be ardeners. My neighbor was not quite so happy to hear she was getting some but when I pointed out how marvelous it was for fertilizer and an absorbant of dew fro feeding camellias, cape jessamine, etc., during the long drought of summer, the attitude changed and all was lovely. I recalled that on Sunday the lady doctor had remarked that the more she saw of J. H. the more she marveled, but, naturally, I did not voice this recollection on my part.

10301, 10302, 10303  
..... I hope.....



10304

10304

A nice letter from WWL today set me to thinking about the possibility of a program, unrelated to the musical aspect of broadcasting whence came today's communication.

My idea centered around the point that some station with GulfStates affiliates might do a series, probably 13 weeks, that would be devoted to personalities that count in a given area. I have in mind such personalities as Miss Dornon in a half hour go at things which would lean heavily upon flowers, particularly with their cultivation, with sidelights on specializations as in iris, dogwood, etc., and some account of the Briarwood area where they have been brought into such a high state of development, especially the native things of the area. Another half hour broadcast might be devoted to A. J. Hodges with an accent on gardening, as opposed to cultivation of Dornon little things, the broad sweep of his imagination in converting a cut-over forest into a haven for souls wanting to "get away from it all". I might by-pass Eugene Watson Linder by calling on I. S. Willard to do an interview on Art generally and restoration in particular, as typified by the current project to restore Fort Jean Baptiste. The list could be endless, of course, and, if properly engineered, might have quite an appeal tourist wise, I should imagine. This suggests that it perhaps should have the blessing of the Louisiana State Department of Parks and Recreation or Commerce and Industry or whatever category into which tourism falls. My guess is that to make the thing effective, it would be essential to have it advertised on the radio in advance as a weekly presentation and at the conclusion of each program, an announcement of what the next one would be about. It's not the type of thing the Rocket was made for but it would be useless to mention it to her as I don't even know where she is, have no notion as to her future commitments and have no assurance that she wouldn't put it on ice, like the Ghana business, until tidied of prolonged refrigeration. Perhaps I shall take it up directly with some radio station as an idea which might be promoted by somebody for the general interest of a considerable number of listeners.

I. S. Willard called me tonight. She had just arrived from her Baton Rouge go-round. She said she talked with James but was unable to see him as her doctor had kept her flattened out in her hotel room during her stay in the capitol. It is not yet known whether or not she will be able to see him.

A full moon suggests the possibility that I might take a crack at gardening on the morrow, -- I hope.....

10305

10305

Wednesday, January 13th, 1960.

Memorandum:  
Warm with misty clouds, not thick enough to keep out of sight the shape of the full moon. It was supposed to rain and get colder but the cold front collapsed somewhere in the Texas Panhandle and we are told we may expect another 24 hours of heat and humidity which suits me to a T.  
There seems to have been considerable excitement in Shreveport yesterday and today. Starting with yesterday, the Shreveport Journal last night reported, among other auto accidents, that an 8 year old child was slightly injured when the car in which he was riding was rammed by a other car, the latter being driven by Mrs. Cammie H. Wenk who as arrested for driving when intoxicated. Hummmmmmm.

I guess it was this morning that Madam General's brother who lives in the neighborhood of Shreveport, went hunting with his father-in-law. The latter's shotgun was fired inadvertently when only 12 feet from the son-in-law, striking him in the upper chest, I believe. It was said that 24 hours would have to elapse before the doctors could say if the man might be expected to survive. The senior S. G.'s immediately rushed to Shreveport and I assume they spent all their time at the hospital although, of course, they might have made a round at the local jail to call on at least one kin folk, I suppose.  
I feel sorry for the younger Wenk kids, with the girl in high school and the boy in the local college where their scholastic associates probably give them a dig now and then about their mama's name appearing in the paper.

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10306

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10306

I coffee-ed across the fence at 9 but said nothing, of course, about the drunken driver but that news filtered through to that locality before 10, suggesting that my grapevine got the jump on my neighbor by several hours. The weather being mild, the lady said she wished the lady doctor would hurry and get Madam Regard's physical and mental strength built up in order that she might come home the sooner. This is the first time I had heard any suggestion that the mental part needed building up. If there is really need for that, the undertaking should be quite an arduous task, I should imagine, in view of the 91 years to be taken into account.

About 9:30, I rounded up some men to give me a hand at gardening and for the balance of the day we were all over the place. I set some of them to work on distributing sawdust mulch about Celeste's roses, camellias, cape jessamine, day lilies and so on. I put Fugabou to ploughing the Ghana garden, others distributing sawdust mulch among the Chinese magnolias in the front garden, rounded up a trailer to move a concrete bench from the big garden to Celeste's and then devoted some time to doing some stuff around Yucca with the aid of some helpers. Fugabou did a good job at ploughing, after which he went over the same acreage with discs and by four o'clock I had him resume the plough to mark off the pie shaped parterres that will constitute the Ghana garden and I even transported a few truck loads of tant's leard thither. In short, the Ghana garden is beginning to take on the shape of outline and tomorrow or within a few days, I shall be transplanting persimmons, crepe myrtles and what not although actual planting of vegetables and flowers will not get going for several weeks yet. It is pleasant, however, to know that the ground is in readiness when the season has sufficiently advanced for doings.

I have a few letters to write and then I think I shall fold for I seem sleepy enough at the close of this somewhat dizzy day.....

10307

10307

Thursday, January 14th, 1960.

Memorandum: continued warm, sprinley and showery most of the day but clear as a bell tonight and although it is supposed to have chilled off, it hasn't and I write with a faint lassitude, induced by the breeze from the Gulf blowing through my open boudoir door.

Narcissus perfumed the Madam's boudoir today because it is her natal day. I sent a greeting to Mildred Cunningham, because she and the Madam always exchanged natal day greetings on this day which was mutually theirs.

In spite of the drizzles, showers and resulting mud in the newly ploughed hana area, my helpers got quite a lot of work done although cled-hopping somehow takes a certain zest out of the type of thing we were engaged in.

I suppose we dug up, hauled and transplanted about 25 or 30 crepe myrtles, some of which were cumbersome and too heavy for the average person to manage by himself. Little Robert, however, being about 6 feet six and probably weight 250 took every thing in his stride and Fugabou, junior Fugabou and Olyte handed ends. I shall have to audit July to discover if the color line is a success or not. Tonight I am not too pleased with the prospect but, perhaps, when additional trees have been added and the various shades emerge with their flowering and the various tints, -- mostly watermelon red, adjust themselves to themselves and their new surroundings, it will not turn out too badly since color is primarily what I am striving for.

I am putting no trees, flowering or otherwise, in the acre or so in front of hana, -- a space about the extent of the garden between the big house and the public road, dominated by the big oak.

The pecanues on the north edge of the hana garden can supply sufficient shade for anyone walkin who wants to use them as parasols. This will leave the entire garden to bake in the summer sunshine and glow, I hope, with colors no end and nothing will obstruct the glimpse of Ghana at the far end either.



10308

10308

Thursday, January 14th, 1960.

I heard a new wrinkle in baby doings, as passed along by the cook today. She has two illegitimate granddaughters, one a year and a half or so, the other about a month. She had felt the little baby wasn't getting along as well as it should, seeming to be crying so much, as though hungry, but this in spite of frequent presentations of the bottle from which the little baby always appeared to consume all the milk. She has a little crib for the child in a quiet room and usually places the baby in it when it is time for the bottle. Only a day or two ago, she discovered a custom that had already become normal practice on the part of the other grandchild who, it turns out, has been playing about in the room where her baby sister is placed, and the year and a half or two year oldster has been slipping the baby's bottle from its crib, drinking the milk and then stuffing the bottle -- empty, -- back into her little sister's mouth.

I don't know why this episode strikes me with such force, all children, not to mention grown-ups, being as unpredictable as they are, but somehow such doings on the part of such small children never came to my knowledge before.

A slight interruption, as between this paragraph and the above. I. S. Wilard called and bubbled over about a book that had been entraining her all day. I am not quite sure of the title but it sounded something like Journal of Thomas Mitten or Minton or some such, -- a Doubleday publication. There were so many things in the book she wanted to read to me that she had put pieces of paper in the pages and then couldn't find the paragraphs she had in mind when she turned to the marked page. Now she is going to sit up half the night, re-reading the book so she can mark the paragraphs with a pencil and thus be able to acquaint me with their contents on the morrow. I must say I S. W. is kindness itself but her potentials for panic do sometimes prevent her from carrying through to the end she might otherwise attain.

What with S. G. Henry being in Shreveport, J. H., for the first time in his life, left the Sister drunken driving business, left the handling of that to somebody else, and I'll bet that general handled it with gusto.....

10309

10309

Friday, January 15th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Clear and cool with a breeze off the ice cakes all day but coming to rest with sundown.

It has been a busy day but, fortunately, without interruptions so that a lot more could be accomplished and I am thankful for that.

I had only Fugabou and Little Robert to lend me a hand but, in spite of that drawback, I guess we dug, moved and transplanted another 25 crepe myrtles, much to my satisfaction. Only three times did I have to send for more strong arms when we encountered crepe myrtles so heavy that the three of us couldn't move them.

I got a laugh out of supper tonight. J. H. brought me a hunk of cheese which Joel Fletcher had sent me, Joel having taken the package with him from Southwestern to Alexandria for a Library Board meeting, or perhaps Baton Rouge. I think Joel is a member of the board of which J. H. is chairman. The natural thing was for me to suggest that J. H. take half of the hunk to his house but he said Joel had sent some to Celeste, too. Then the clerk, who is often speaking out of turn, remarked that Joel had also sent me a gallon of ice cream and a like amount to Celeste but J. H., like a child caught raiding the cookie jar, giggled and admitted he had kept the two gallons of ice cream for his house, -- doubly funny since the store carries ice cream anyway so that it is always easily available although it is not of the quality turned out by Southwestern. When J. H. and the clerk had left the table, I called the cook and told her to cut the cheese in two and she was delighted, and when I reached home, I found Andy pausing on



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his way home, --he had been working next door, and I asked him to divide my half of the cheese again and he took his half with him, and I am only regretting I couldn't have split the gallon of ice cream with Doreatha once and Andy again.

This morning I couldn't figure out how it was that my old gray cat, for the first time in her life was talking in such a friendly manner with me, for she never talks and because I don't like her much, I call her no account. She is the same gray color of old grandpa who passed on over a year ago and so she does remind me of him a little. This afternoon when we paused on the front gallery for a coke, Little "overt remarked that he didn't know Grandpa had come back. I told him that grandpa had disappeared a year or two ago and that the cat making the mewling was No Account. He pointed to the end of the gallery and remarked that he believe that was No Account down yonder and the cat trying to be friendly with me must be Grandpa, --and, Lord, so it was. I neverly collapsed with amazement and delight, and Grandpa, apparantly depressed by the morning's brush off, seemed just as delighted as I when I leaned over to give him a hand.

Carmen called this morning to say the Shreveport Times carried an item to the effect that a Woman's Division had been established by the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce. It was noted that Ola Mae had been named Chairman. Naturally I dropped her a line of congratulation but wondered to myself the while if cook book publishing or Chamber of Commerce business would sag the more. Jack Britton called me this morning to say J. H. had referred him to me about receiving a flock of outstanding Louisiana farmers and their wives, meeting in Natchitoches in convention on the morrow. I appointed 3:30 as the magical hour. I was invited ~~thru~~ to accompany them on a tour to Uncle Tom's cabin and thence to a cocktail party given by the Sterling Evanses which, naturally enough, I declined. Jack said he and Ann were moving to their new home today, more or less across the street from Pat's and Juanita B.'s. And so the week end begins and I hold the thought it may be one of rest and relaxation in Lyme.....

10311

10311

Sunday, January 17th, 1960.

Memorandum: I . . . . .

Clear and cool tonight, following a cloudy Saturday and a Saturday night of thunder storms and a couple of inches of rain.

For the most part, the week end was quiet enough and contrary to custom, I folded up my beard early last night being in bed by 9 and asleep by 10:01. But I awoke 19 minutes later when someone tapped at my door. It was J. H. who had come to ask if I was alright. It seems that he and Celeste had retired early, too, but had been awakened by a loud bang and J. H. had come over to see if it had disturbed me, too. It hadn't. The artist called this morning to ask if I had heard a rumbling around 9 last night. I confessed I hadn't. She said she had just gone to bed and so just pulled the covers over her head and gone to sleep which seems to have been the wisest thing to have done.

On Saturday afternoon I had 35 or 40 representative farmers and wives, meeting in Natchitoches at some sort of a convention, and dragged down here for a look at the African buildings. They were all very nice, reminding me somewhat of Pat on the husband side and Juanita B. on the wife.

Bylthe came this afternoon. She had her own friends, Johnson, with her. I did not recognize the latter. Her personality is of the neutrality Blythe likes to have as a companion, so that Mirima J. might have been anyone but Joan Frantz whose hair is pure white.



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January 18th, 1960

while this lady's hair was a blue reminding me of Gainsborough's Blue Boy. As both ladies were hatless, the blue was quite impressive. I guess Blythe's hair was its natural gray. I did not notice, however, that the curve from the base of her head to her shoulder blades was much more curved than the last time she was here but she seemed to be as gay as usual.

She brought a letter from her son, Paul King, who had some information about gourds he wanted her to give me and we talked about politics and Ed Rand's success and she had much to tell me about the stupidity of the "niggers" because they failed to vote for her candidate, Davis, who was so anti racial in the last weeks of his campaign. I still can't imagine why the colored folks should cast their votes for a man who proclaimed himself a believer in maintaining the slavery attitude but, then, I have never understood Blythe on racial matters anyway.

She didn't seem at all upset that Whitfield Jack was being sued with his clients for half a million dollars in the kidnap case of a year or so ago and I was glad of that. She did ask if she could bring up the director of the Alexandria TV programs who had seen the Picayune article about me at Blythe's house and wanted to have her arrange an interview. I suggested this gentleman and his assistant would probably enjoy their visit more if they waited a month or two when they could take a gander at the blossoming Chinese magnolias.

Celeste and J. H. returned about 7 from an afternoon in town. At the Hatchitoches Hospital they met the S. G. Henrys, returning from Shreveport to Baton Rouge, together with another brother of Madam General who lives in Baton Rouge, too. The Shreveport brother may or may not survive the gun shot wound. Madam General's sister in the Shreveport area is about to go off her rocker again and the latter's husband is ailing from a recent operation and their daughter is down with flu. It sounds like Black House alright. I suppose at tomorrow's coffee I shall learn what, if anything, was learned from the S. G.'s about the drunken driving case. I turn now to Meet the Press which ought to be diverting, even if dull.....

11801

10313

Monday, January 18th, 1960.

Memorandum: Clear and cold with a North wind blowing all day and diminishing not at all at sun down. I'm so glad I'm not a blackbird, having to sleep in the shattered bamboo hedges tonight for the weather man says the thermometer will sag to 23 and I am prepared to believe him.

I got no information at the coffee hour this morning because le pere Antoine was present. He and our hostess fell to talking about a little statue of St. Isador she had given Math Hertzog which the latter had put atop a gate along the highway at the juncture of the public road and a plantation road. Le pere Antoine asked me if I wouldn't like to see it and I said I would and he accordingly drove me down for a quick gander at the thing. It looked very nice but Mat, in characteristic dumbness, had put two signs against trespassing on each of the up-rights supporting the horizontal top beam of the gate. Under the statue ran the legend: "St. Isador, - Pray for us",

while on the two supports below ran a more mundane legend reading something about not trespassing, all of which somehow reminded me of Cousin Emmet Erwin's Christmas card of Peace and Good Will on the inside and Remember Little Rock stamped on the outside. I prayed le pere Antoine to go see Mat and suggest the no trespassing signs be removed from the St. Isador supports and placed on adjoining posts of the gate entrance.

It seems to me there is much to be said about St. Isador which I may or may not take a whack at in a Cane River Memo although it seems to me I have already touched upon that gentleman once before in that column but few, if any, readers will remember that.



10314

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In spite of today's raw breeze, I got quite a lot of work done in the Ghana section, setting out more crepe myrtles, transplanting more Iant's Beard and getting a low fence built in front of Ghana itself. Come to think of it, I really didn't get the fence built but I got all the posts in which is the thing which takes time and labor. I plan using bamboo poles for the connections between the posts and they can be added any time between now and the moment it's time to plant gourds 8 or 10 weeks hence.

I had such a strange feeling tonight when listening to Invitation to Learning. The artist called me just as the program began and so I did not get in on the program until after it had begun. Just as it was about to conclude, there was another call from the artist that distracted me at the very conclusion and the net result is that I don't know yet what the title of the book may have been and can merely guess that it was by Miguel de Unamuno or however that Spanish gent spelled his name. During the discussion itself, I was occasionally annoyed, as in the past week or two, when two or more of the gentlemen participating in the discussion spoke at the same time or broke in on each other in such a fashion as to blot out some of the spoken words so that, all in all, I didn't get as much learning as I yearned for. In short, the mountain labored and brought forth a moth hole.

The Library of Congress list arrived today and goes forward in another envelope. Somehow it seems so small this time. I hold the thought you will not let it get in your chair when it comes to hand for I am under the impression your response probably is always about the first that the Library receives.

I. S. Willard just called. As national chairman of some Art thing, she is preparing something and re-doing it and what do I think or, errrr, welll, that is, or rather what I had in mind, or rather, not exactly what I have in mind but in case I should and I was glad it was nearly 11 o'clock and probably nobody would be wanting to use the line. Poor I. S. W., she is so kind and yet such a panic.

And now I must call it a day and panic to bed, shivering in my warmth as I consider 3 million freezing blackbirds in the shattered hedges on this bitter night.....

10315

10315

Tuesday, January 19th, 1960.

Memorandum: Clear and cold last night, cloudy and cold today with the promise for slightly heavier freeze tonight. At noon the Shreveport thermometer had not moved above 31 and the ground here, too soggy yesterday, was so frozen I could get a spade into the good earth. A few foolish magnolias had flowered during the day but this morning they were "cooked". One thing is certain, none unfolded today to get caught tonight.

I coffee-ed with Celeste this morning. She was in a happy frame of mind. She is going to New Orleans with J. H. to spend Thursday and Friday down yonder. I suppose there is some Agricultural convention for the Jerry Pratts are going with them, --a traveling companion in the case of Herr Pratt whom I cannot imagine.

The clerk 'phoned me from the store this afternoon, saying there was some gentleman there I might want to talk to. I received the man who reminded me vaguely of Rudolph. He said he is doing feature articles for the Houston Chronicle and the New Alliance, that he thought the Melrose story had been told so often, he had decided to do one on the artist whom he had just been to see and wondered if he might look at some of her paintings as she had none at her house. I showed him those at Ghana but did not show him those in the African House. He made voluminous notes but did not, I believe, have much notion as to what it was all about.

At no time did I ask him to sit down and after three quarters of an hour I was escorting him to the front gate. When we got along by the old palm, he asked me if the Yucca House was haunted. I told him I hoped so and asked him why he asked. He said he felt that in telling him so much about the artist, he felt I stressed color so much that he wondered if the house in which I lived had in any way effected me. I told him that if he meant to imply that I was crazy he was quite wrong for, in a matter of confidence, I wanted to confess to him that I was quite nuts. He seemed to accept that as obvious but did ask if he might come back. I told him we



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might be able to arrange an appointment but that it would be imperative that he write for same. And so we said Goodbye and I did not bother to tell him, as I had intended doing, that the Houston Chronicle had already done a story on the artist and therefore would not by the wildest stretch of circumstances, repeat it. For some people, I suppose, Hell is going to be a Heaven in which they find themselves but haven't the capacity to recognize where they are.

I called Ann at the Chamber of Commerce this afternoon for an address. She said her mama was there and so I chatted with Ora for a few minutes. She was bogged down in curtains for Ann's new house, the house that made Orade decide to forego the European trip this summer. She said that Mrs. J. H. Williams is going to Illinois for a couple of months to be with her daughter, Claudia, who is going to have an heir and that during her absence, she is taking over the care of the other Williams children plus the husband. I said I thought that fine since it would provide an excellent exchange of entertainment next year when Ora decides to make her Oxford studies and the other Williams family can entertain her children and husband and she laughingly agreed.

Carmen called during the afternoon to rattle off a lot of impossible town gossip and ended up by recalling how her mother was want to take her to New Orleans occasionally when a child to attend the Opera in the old French Opera House.

She was quite entertaining when she mentioned the first time her mother and two aunts journeyed to New Orleans to attend the theatre and how in the hotel they first encountered electric lights. The bellboy who had shown them to their suite had turned on the lights when they entered and that as none of the ladies had any notion as to how such things were extinguished they had been hesitant about confessing their ignorance to anyone and had retired with the lights blazing, their silk petticoats draped over the chandeliers to subdue the lights as much as possible.

And now I must roll up sleeves and do an artifice, perhaps on St. Isador and then call it a day.....

10317

10317

Wednesday, January 20th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold, --22 last night, upper 30's today in spite of a brilliant sun, and back into the 20's tonight.

A dandy letter from Lyme with clipping came through by air from Lyme....telephone interruption.... was I saying that as of the 15th, the communication reached its destination by the 20th. Praise God that it came through.

The man who was supposed to come for a look at the reading machine got bogged down with flu and was kind enough to have his office advise me to that effect and so I shall have to wait another few days for his recuperation and eventual arrival but I have a feeling the machine is going to make it alright on the 16 go-round.

I am especially appreciative of the thumb nail sketch of the local hearth and well can I appreciate how the ice curtain is rather slow about thawing. The fact that a minor dent was made in it is something to be grateful about and let's hold the thought that Time will go far in healing many things although the time-lag sometimes seems interminable.

It was so kind of you to let me know about the Sullivan matter about which I knew nothing other than her sudden death. She was one of those remarkable personalities whom everyone who matters at this bend of the river really liked and because of that, especial interest was taken in reports of recent events. I think nobody in town ever met her but several of Miss Cam's friends knew of the latter's fondness for her and accordingly have 'phoned me on the subject during the past couple of weeks.

The interruption above was a call from Mrs. Walker saying that the Enterprise had just "gone to bed" and that it is a small issue this week although the subscription list has increased 50 or 60 individuals within the last couple of days which is pleasant news to any Editor, I suppose. I believe it is Friday night the Walkers leave for New Orleans for the annual Louisiana Press get together. They kindly invited me to go as their guest which I thought very nice of them.



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19318

Wednesday, January 20th, 1960

Carmen called me today to tell me a couple of things. She and her sister passed by the Natchitoches hospital at 5 yesterday afternoon and they were both surprised at the decline of Madam Regard's physical and mental status since the last time they visited her, perhaps 10 days ago. They inquired of her nurse on this point and the latter merely nodded her head. They gathered that the hospitalization period might not extend much longer, -- a couple of weeks, perhaps, a couple of months, -- anybody's guess.

I coffee-ed alone with Celeste this morning. She is in a very gay mood and plans taking off for New Orleans with J. H. in the morning for a couple of day's stay.

I suppose the L. S. U. murder mystery may be attracting interest outside the Pelican State, -- it seems to be such an unusual type of thing for a Dean of a Graduate School to be figuring in. Everyone I know who is acquainted with those most intently concerned in the doings is astonished and apparently everybody liked everybody and thought all concerned quite civilized. It isn't often the newspapers get such a unique murder story and I suppose they must be making the most of it. One thing is obvious and that is that the average readers of the tabloids could never comprehend the friendships existing between the doctors and the way the headline writers will rig up the scenery will be outrageous, one may be sure.

The other thing Carmen wanted to tell me was about the Governor's Natchitoches sister calling her this morning. Olive Long Cooper allowed that since the President of the United States is limited in the number of times he can be elected to the Presidency, she thinks Thelma Kyser should be re-placed by someone as President of the hysterical ladies, showing, as Olive does for the millionth time, that she is a bag and a fool to boot. Thelma is made for the job and no matter how much Olive would like the

10301

19319

Thursday, January 21st, 1960.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold with the ice on the big pot never thawing out in spite of the bright sunshine.

The travelers in the direction of the Crescent City didn't get started so early this morning as they had anticipated, remaining until after coffee time before heading out. Jerry Pratts did not accompany them because of some illness in Mrs. Pratt's family. I believe Mr. Wood of R. E. A. drove with J. H. and Celeste.

The latter mentioned over coffee that her nephew, a Baton Rouge lawyer, has a home hard by the place where Dr. Macmillan's body was found. Talk goes on about that incredible case and my attention was drawn to articles about it in News Week, Time and so on. I believe it is News Week that headlines the case: "Louisiana Shudders". Well, all I can say about that is that Louisiana has been shuddering so long in the political field that another spasm or two in some other field ought to be almost refreshing although not at all novel.

This morning Mrs. Nash who is Miss Sally's nurse, called to ask if her daughter and son-in-law might make a round this afternoon. I set the hour of 2, inviting Mrs. Nash to come with them and she did. I guess her daughter is pregnant but I only guess for I didn't take a second glance in her direction for I must confess I wasn't much interested in my guests, -- nice enough people but interested in nothing entrancing me I never cease to marvel at the immense amount of time people have to do things in which they aren't interested really. I suppose killing time is the thing and probably it doesn't matter much time you steal from others just so long as you can get rid of a slice of the day before boredom of being by one's self sets in again.

I inquired after Miss Sally's health, learning she



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is now 87 and is getting along nicely. I suppose she is getting along nicely, whatever that means, just so long as it includes senility as part of the business. Having been enjoying poor health for the past 40 or 50 years, making her family and household jump crooked to satisfy all her whims and always keep the draperies drawn to eliminate daylight so that she cannot tell if it be day or night, --if that's getting along nicely, that's just fine. Somehow it reminds me of variations on the old, old theme of one person remarking that death and destruction has just swept away the family and the speaker expresses the opinion his own illness makes him feel on the point of death whereupon the person to whom he is relating his troubles inquires:

"How are you feeling otherwise."

I still haven't learned the way to get particular stations on my new radio without simply fishing a bout and hoping to stumble over same. Tonight I wanted to get some news from "atchitoches" but got so fascinated by another station close to it that I simply staid on that one until the news cast was completed. The station was so much clearer than the nearest one that I was curious to learn its identity and was mildly surprised when it turned out to be a broadcast from the island of Nassau.

The artist's rmance continues but the cold weather slows up the number of visitations in person by Joe Pen Metoyer but they make up for lack of personal contacts by frequent use of the 'phone and the lover continues in his efforts to correct his sweetheart's English.

I picked up the 'phone to dial a number this noon and heard her say:

"I didn't thought it would have feel so cold this mornin' ....."

I don't know what the response to that one may have been but teacher, himself a little faulty in the purity of his English, must have had quite a lecture to take care of that phrase.....

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Friday, January 22nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Continued fair and cold, --22 at dawning and ice on the pot.

First off, let me hasten to mention what I neglected to refer to in my memo of yesterday, --my sincere gratitude for the inquiry about tape and my assurance that there is an adequate supply on hand. Without knowing a thing about such matters, I have an instinctive feeling that it is probably just as well to secure tape as short a time in advance as practicable. I have no evidence to show that tape is effected by climat o conditions but I have a feeling at the same time that securing a new supply would probably be just as wise if done only when a reserve begins dwindling and, I am glad to say that, thanks to generous provisions in the past, the current stock is adequate but, if I may do so, I shall mention an possible need in the future a month or so in advance so that everyone may count on data being set forth and thus obviating a need to the point o uncertainty along the way. It is so much a part of little Miss Lee's way of doing things to give thought to possible needs in advance that I cannot but express my appreciation all over again of this latest manifestation. I am using the recorder right along but at the present time I am employing it only for brief notes,-- addresses, etc., what with much activity in other than desk work at the present time so that the current supply is drawn upon infrequently and then used over and over again so that the back log is quite ample.

Under separate cover I am sending along the current issue of the Hodges Magazette or whatever the publication is called. I don't want it back, of course. From the illustrations in one section, I take it the afticle about the African House appears in this issue, --an article, like most things knocked off on this machine, which was sent without reading and which, after its appearance in print, I never seem to get around to glance through. I



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hold the thought it turned out alright. I gather that the illustrations for the other articles are pretty and I assume this little publication is an expensive job. For the type of thing that it is, however, designed, I suppose, for distribution to Chambers of Commerce, Federated Clubs and the like, it somehow doesn't quite strike the bull's eye. In the first place, it strikes me that its format is on the inconvenient side so far as actual measurements are concerned. I believe it is a quarterly publication and it seems to me that much more might be accomplished by it, were the four issues be combined into a single volume. The point is that in spite of the excellent printing, the thinness of the issue puts it perilously close to the category of trash mail passing over Chamber of Commerce desks the world around and probably too frequently finds its way almost immediately into the trash basket, so far as the size and thin nature of the present issue goes. Who is responsible for this fact, I haven't the slightest notion, possibly Mr. Hodges, perhaps Miss Word, perhaps Miss Ramsey, possibly Mr. Byrd, --or, perhaps all four or any number of those named. I seem to have forgotten Charles Phillips and I wonder what has happened to that gentleman for I don't seem to have heard his name mentioned in the last six months. Should I no hear it mention in the next 600 years, I shouldn't mind and this in spite of the fact that the last I did hear was a rumor that he was speaking of me with vast enthusiasm. That news, however, cut no ice since, like so many people we know of the Nixon persuasion, he, too, would be likely to get on any popularity band wagon if he thought, as he may well think, that there is a happy relation existing between Mr. Hodges and me.

I was indoors very little today but on one occasion when I was, I got a 'phone call from Carmen who had nothing in particular to say. She did report having been over to Montgomery, La last night with Thelma and en route, told her about Olive Long Cooper's suggestion that Thelma be not re-elected. They both got a laugh out of the Long-Cooper observation, and a spiration, especially in view of the fact that Olive hasn't even paid her last year's dues to the organization but, like any Long, that wouldn't deter her from aspiring to take over. Olive, in short, is a sight.

Forgive a dull memo. Perhaps I can find some enclosures that may offer something better.....

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Sunday, January 24th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Clear and continued cold. It was interesting that Lyme continues with higher temperatures by a degree or two than does this neighborhood. Saturday night there were clouds and about 9 we had quite a pelting fleet which fortunately didn't last very long. But this morning, although there was no evidence of snow on the ground, every fence post and every magnolia bud was wearing a little white cap and when the sun rose, a shower of water cascaded from the eaves from the sleet that had linger on the roof.

As usual, J. H. spent the afternoon at the club and Celeste with her mama. They were about an hour later in reaching home tonight than usual. J. H. has flu and the lady doctor had seen him at the hospital and given him a perscription to be filled before leaving town. It will be in the lower 20's again in the morning and I hold the thought he may be wise enough to remain in bed and not go chasing about the plantation at dawning.

He brought me some lovely people about 15 minutes before dinner this noon and I asked them to linger while I attended to some business across the fence and they did. It was a man and wife who had retired and purchased an avacado range somewhere in the San Diego area. They are apparently having a wonderful retirement and are devoting themselves to a study of American museums which seems to me to be a study of sufficient scope to keep them occupied for a long time.

Miss Myra had shown them some Hunter creations while they were in Hatcher and I was glad to learn through them that she is up and about. They had also been in New Iberia where people had confirmed Miss Myra's recommendation that they visit



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this section before going on to Oklahoma where they wanted to look over some museums before going on to Santa Fe, their last major stop before heading for San Diego and home. They are especially interested in early American art and mentioned efforts in conjunction with Mrs. Rockefeller, mama of the Governor, who, I learned from them, has exerted herself considerably in early American Art which, perhaps, explains in part the Governor's interest in the Arts, too.

The tried to persuade me to go to town to dine with them, promising to bring me home afterward but, naturally, I declined. They asked if I liked avocado as a food item and when I allowed as how I did, they threatened to send me some from their grove and I hope they don't forget and I think they will not. It was interesting that they had with them some plantation note paper and cook books they had purchased from Letitia Bowman of the Village Shop in Alexandria.

Tonight's radio has so much to say about doings in North Africa. Although the President of France was never one of my favorite characters, I think he is so right in insisting that Algeria be given the right to select its own Government that I hope he wins out in the present scuffle. The way the army in that province has been running things the way it wanted to has been a most disturbing factor in Mediterranean doings and the sooner the tail ceases wagging the bull, the better things will be all around.

The artist called me tonight, as she does almost every 24 hours, but somehow I got the impression tonight that her call was inspired by someone else. Her son, King, worked on Little Eva during the past year under little Edgar Rogier, white, who is the overseen. The artist began by asking me if I couldn't take her some time to see whatever that thing was on Little Eva that she heard so much tell of, --obviously referring to Uncle Tom's cabin. I told her that would be easy. She went on to report that King told her that little Edgar sure need me.

Frances Henry was in Hatchitoches this week end. She lives across the road from the Mickey's but says she has never seen anyone going in or out of the house, perhaps because she herself is seldom home. Dr. Mickey has frequently visited the local college and everyone here likes him so much.....

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Monday, January 25th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Fair and warmer, sort of 50-ish, and tonight will stand around 40 which is a step in the right direction.

J. H. is remarkable. He remained in bed until 8 this morning and then was up with his flu and going about and this afternoon he went to Alexandria and wasn't back for supper. I guess he must be about the worst patient I know.

Celeste's nephew, Dan Regard, came up from L. S. U. today, bringing his girl friend with him and also the girl to whom his brother, Joe, will marry in May if he returns from Japan by then. They are remaining over night.

Sylvan Friedman and wife brought a Mr. and Mrs. Cartwright of Phoenix, Arizona for a round, --by appointment, this afternoon. The State Senator seemed astonished at all he had to see. Of course he comprehended little but was nevertheless impressed.

He is Chairman of the new State Committee on Tourism and, of course, will have much to say about who gets the jobs on State projects for advertising during the next few years. In behalf of the Rocket, I took the opportunity to make known to him her accomplishments with films, --Hodges, Essae Mae, etc., etc., and I shall pen her a brief note tonight, advising her of today's conversation at Yucca so that when she gets ready to wave her photographic lamps in the direction of the State Committee, her accomplishments will have already been made known in that quarter.

Thelma called me today and asked me if I didn't want to run over to Hodges Gardens with her tomorrow afternoon when El Camino Real will hold a meeting. Naturally I thanked her and declined. I suppose, in view of the C. B. Byrd letter of last week that perhaps the Garden film may be in the works and so perhaps the Rocket and the Lost Word will be among those present. Thelma is pinched for time as she has to get back for a reception she and John



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are giving for the midterm graduates but she threatens to report on El Camino Real doings to me on Wednesday morning.

I had three men to assist me this afternoon in gardening at Ghana. The Friedmans and the Cartwrights, on leaving here about 4, said they were going in the Cartwright plane to look over the Cane River country and that they might get down this way between 4:30 and five. They made it about 4:45, passing low over the garden so that the workmen and I could wave to them.

I enjoyed tonight's Invitation to Learning, for the Sophocles opus, no matter how often it is discussed, always has excellent meat and will always supply food for thought, no matter who does the masticating. Next week Anna Karenina will be on the air waves if the politicians don't crowd out Tolstoy. I shall be interested to hear what the experts have to say. As an amateur in Russian literature, I would probably start off by saying that I think the author could have shortened his book considerably without any great loss. War and Peace is too long as a story but eventually does terminate at something approaching a logical point. Anna Karenina, however, arrives at the logical point of conclusion but keeps right on going as pointlessly as though the local artist had painted a mural to fill the four interior walls of a room and then went right on painting some more so that the tail end of the thing had to be pushed out of the window where it was left flapping in the breeze, the artist lacking the sense of fitness had failed to cut off the excess. Perhaps Tolstoy was more of a mural painter than a designer of pictures that could be fitted neatly into a frame. From the title of the novel, at least, one might suppose the book to be a novel about Anna Karenina but from the way the books keeps right on going after Anna has been eliminated from the story by her death, one might say with a measure of justice, I think, that Tolstoy somehow forgot he was building his story around that lady and had, following her departure, gone off on a tangent with his pen and started depicting life in Russia in general rather than life as revealed by the career of one unfortunate woman. It has been so long since I read the novel, I must have another go at it before long to see if experiences during the interim between readings gives me more sympathy of what the author was trying to do. I fear I got off the track, Forgive me.....

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Tuesday, January 26th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Warm and cloudy with occasional sprinkles this afternoon but not enough to keep me from working out of doors all day.

I'm alone on the plantation tonight. J. H., after going to Alexandria yesterday, returned to the Hatchitoches area, going directly to the hospital where the lady doctor is said to have shaken a finger at him for so much traveling about, and put him to bed. This morning about 8, Celeste called the hospital to see how he had passed the night and, to everyone's surprise at that end of the phone, nobody could find him. He put in an appearance a little later, saying he had simply run in to town to get a shave. He spent the balance of the day in the hospital, -- I think, -- and tonight Celeste is staying there, too, either with him or Adam Regard, because she is afraid to stay in the country. Once more in less than a week, I am master of the hound.

Celeste's nephew, his girl friend and his future sister-in-law spent the night with Celeste and headed back toward St. Martinsville or New Iberia sometime this morning. They seem to me to be sweet young ladies, pretty, charming and apparently without an idea above an oyster. I saw them only a few minutes at coffee time when we were interrupted by some friend of Dan Henry who wanted me to give some plants for a town garden. That knocked out the little tour I had planned for the young folks and instead I dug banana plants, nandina, Giant's Beard and live oaks. The man with his wife said they would be back many times for more hauls as their car would hold no more on this go-round. It is strange how the wife in appearance reminds me of Helen. Like Helen, she lost her husband but unlike Helen whose husband died of a heart attack, this lady's husband died from gun shots inflicted by his wife. The widowhood was as brief as her stay in jail and now a new garden is being fashioned.

Carmen, that invaluable bluejay, phoned me



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this morning. In today's Times Picayune on the society page, she read me that Carolyn Ramsey was giving a showing of her new picture, "Garden in the Forest" this afternoon at a private gathering of the Orleans Club, parenthetically, the Orleans Club is supposed to be the ultimate in the Crescent City.

Assuming this news to be correct, I come to several conclusions, first among which is the probability that Carolyn, as I had assumed, would not be present at the El Camino Real meeting at the Gardens this afternoon. Further, I assume, that the picture must be complete. Thirdly I assume that C. B. Byrd either did or did not know this and if he didn't he should have and if he did, he should have passed along the news to me. Fourthly I assume that an error was made in having the initial showing of this film in New Orleans instead of in Natchitoches or some other community in the El Camino Real country. Fifthly, I take it that the public relations segment of the Hodges enterprises is working no better than usual and it has always seemed to me that somehow or other it just doesn't spark and never has sparked the way it should. Sixthly, I assume there's no secret about the New Orleans showing today since the event is announced in today's Picayune and therefore I feel no constraint about having a notice about this appear in Thursday's Enterprise with some casual hope expressed that it may be shown before long in the neighborhood where it was filmed. So far as I know, no one has any claims on the film locally but since the aid of the community is being sought to further plans for El Camino Real, it seems to me the gesture of an early showing in the neighborhood of the shooting and where so many people contributed in various little ways to its success may have an early opportunity to see the finished creation. Carmen was fortifying Thelma with the Picayune notice before Thelma left for the Gardens and today's El Camino Real conference. I shall be interested to learn what happened at that meeting and especially what Mr. Big had to say about the New Orleans showing.

Ho, hum we seem to know so many people, so few of whom we understand.....

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Wednesday, January 27th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A beautiful, cloudless summer's day, so warm, in fact, that I had to divest myself of a long sleeve for a short sleeve shirt. This will induce of silly magnolias to start putting forth their finery and then Jack Frost will reap a fine harvest.

I am alone on the plantation again tonight. Celeste came down for an afternoon's nap, I believe, but is said to have gone back to town an hour later, along about 3. I did not see her. J. H. threatened to return home tonight but I did not see him so I reckon he will be exchanging the role of patient for plantation operator tomorrow morning. We certainly have some curious examples of how people react to illness and the part hospitals play in the doings.

Thelma called me this morning to say John is exhausted and wants to come to see me some time this week end, just to relax and talk with a kindred soul. I gathered from what Thelma had to say that John is provoked with certain aspects of life in the institution over which he presides. I hadn't ever dreamed of such a thing but I gathered from what Thelma had to say that many a student, and especially is it true among the veterans, that if they fail in their examinations, they take it out on the college by wilfully destroying college property, ripping furniture to pieces and the Lord know what all. This requires stern action on the part of the security force of the college which is backed up by the President and the whole business is distasteful to an educational administrator. Poor John will come down to collapse on my sofa and he and I shall take the world apart and put it back as it would best please us that it should be, after which he will return to his duties which are bound to irk him.

Thelma said she rushed over to the Gardens with such speed yesterday and rushed back in the same speed that she did not get much out of the meeting. Mr. Hodges



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was not present and, of course, Carolyn wasn't either. Ola Mae was, however, and she reported that there must have been some mistake about Carolyn showing the Garden in the first film to the Orleans club that afternoon since it was Ola Mae's understanding that the sound track had not been completely effected. The meeting did decide that a general meeting, comprising all prominent members of the area should be held next week when it would be decided how the film and through whom, --what organizations, it will be sponsored and when. The next meeting would also decide on starting a membership drive for a project that will beautify the highway of the King, probably along lines I suggested in a Cane River Memo sometime last year. Everything having to do with Hodges projects seem to require so many meetings to determine dates for the following meetings that I am more convinced than ever that the password of the whole effort should have but a single word to cover the case: - Procrastination.

I was amused this morning at breakfast when I found the key to my dumbness at supper last night. Last Pilgrimage time, Beth had a row with her brother, J. H. Williams, as to whether she would be able to extract her mother's diamonds from the vault to have they on display at Beaufort during the go-round. I knew about it the time but had forgotten it. About 4:30 yesterday afternoon, Dr. Talley, the New Orleans lady doctor, dropped in for a little chat. Ten minutes before supper I handed her back to her car at the front gate in a gentle downpour. Dan and the clerk were on the store gallery and saw the lady depart. At supper, Dan asked me if I had extracted my diamonds from my caller. I had no idea about what he was talking and allowed as how I hadn't. This morning I asked the clerk to clarify the inquiry which was obviously jocular. He said he and Dan, on the way to supper had been talking about Beth whom they had seen me with at the front gate just before the supper bell. I was as astonished about the identity of my guest as the clerk was and he was as positive that he and Dan were correct as to my caller's identity as I was. The clerk admitted I ought to know, of course, but still he felt sure he and Dan had been in no error either. What a to-do about nothing.

I am baking a potatoe in the ancient Dutch oven and I wish little Miss Lee were here to share it with me in about 2 seconds

ES801

10331

Thursday, January 28th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Another lovely summer's day but a little cloudy tonight which may bring us a little shower before tomorrow's cooler, fair weather, according to the prognosticator. The baked potato was wonderful last night, so good, in fact, that I'm stirring up another on the old Dutch oven tonight, and this in spite of the fact that due to what I ate or not, I did have one of those extremely rare experiences in my life, a nightmare. I suppose one never really gets accustomed to such things although the settings may always be different, the personification of terror always remains the same but inordinate as it may seem, I seldom seem to muster up the power to awaken myself until the episodes run their interminable, ridiculous courses.

This morning about 10:30, I heard a familiar, strident voice which, fortunately died out and the owner of same was deflected in her course before reaching this section of the garden. Sister, with her eldest son, passed through this place, en route to Baton Rouge where her son hoped to get his mid term marks and with his mama, be guests for the next couple of days at the home of the General. His call seems so odd since nobody in such a gathering can do other than abhor the other. At dinner time, the travelers had gone on, thanks Heaven, and I learned they would remain in Baton Rouge until Sunday. I don't give them that long but do hope they don't return home the same way they left.

It is pleasant to report that J. H. appears to be on the mend. After remaining at the hospital last night, he be-stirred himself before dawn and rode down here with the clerk who commutes from town. I believe Celeste came down around 10 this morning but I did not see her and I suppose she returned to spend the afternoon with her mama or "doing errands" in town.

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Ann called me this afternoon to report that Ora is in Cabrini, having undergone a major operation, whatever that is. She said her mother would probably be under sedation for 3 or 4 days but they believed she was getting along alright.

Today's post brought the enclosure from Charlotte Carroll concerning the tragedy of her grand-daughter. In a way it seems rather strange such a report did not reach the air waves across the nation, what with all the "See America First" traveling that goes on in our national parks every year. Perhaps the news did appear in various press media but, if so, I did not hear it. Quite aside from the horror of the business, it would seem to me that all travelers to our national parks should be made acquainted with such possibilities even though the national park people may well prefer keeping such items out of the news.

No wonder John Kyser has a headache, what with four members of his college football team having confessed to 9 break-ins and burglaries during the past 8 weeks. Such performances by college people is bad enough on any level but inordinately bad, it strikes me, when the much publicized football heroes of the campus, pampered by most colleges with extra funds and positions of leadership and honor, --but there's no point in re-hashing that old stuff.

I was especially impressed by the space and the plethora of pictures in last week's Life covering the outrageous Miss Bendedict and her Rumanian boy friend. I wonder if the array of pictures and the remark that in Paris the couple were in company with two Life staff members, --if these fact, I say, struck you as suggesting that probably somebody, mostly the Rumanian, probably got quite a payoff from the magazine for his cooperation in securing some of the illustrations and the inside story on the Paris phase of this lamentable episode. Well, Lord, it's time for me to sample my potato and to a dab of telepathy at the same time.....

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Friday, January 29th, 1960.

Memorandum:

It rained about an inch last night and then turned into a cold spell which continued throughout today with the clouds remaining but the promise of blue skies for tonight and tomorrow.

For the first time in several days, I coffee-ed with the lady across the fence. She has the sniffles and said she was remaining home all. She has in mind attending a banquet at noon tomorrow when the Hysterical ladies will break bread at the Country Club.

I thought it interesting as a commentary on Went procedure when I learned from Celeste that the Shreveport hejira to Baton Rouge was unannounced to Baton Rouge. Sister declared that when they were in Shreveport, the General and wife and, on leaving, said she should drop in to see them sometime. On the strength of that, she had decided that she and her son would indeed drop in and thus the Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday surprise. I have a feeling that the visit will not last that long, but whether it does or not, Baton Rouge will have had fully as much as they bargained for, I imagine.

The radio from the station in town today had more to say about the four football heroes of Northwestern who had admitted 9 robberies in and about the town. The news today was to the effect that one of the youths from Texas had confessed to two other robberies in his home town, bringing his total to 11, --at least only 11 thus far admitted. I thought it especially interesting that one of the places he confessed robbing in his home State was the cafe his own father operated from which he extracted \$175. or \$180. in a single haul. I believe he is 19 and seems to be making quite a start in his pursuit of education and especially sports.



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I listened with particular interest tonight to the reports on what the President of France had to say about the Algerian rumpus. As you know, I have never been very enthusiastic about the man and less enthusiastic about the 4th Republic's performances, so that the 5th Republic seemed much better, even if less democratic, still it did have a little more semblance of a national Government.

As regards the Algerian thing at the moment, the primary matter of the moment is to put the Army in its proper place and the President is quite right if he puts his foot down on that point and holds it down. An army should never be more than the instrument of civil authority. In short, the dog should wag the tail, not the tail wag the dog and unless an army is, in respect to established order, merely a tail, then it has no excuse for being

Flu seems to be making broad inroads on the plantation folks and I'm beginning to think I was lucky in having a bout with the thing in November, assuming that some sort of immunity results for a while, following one go-round. Several people today were hauling their children and themselves to town for medical attention and there's a husband and wife affliction in the same category in the case of the overseer and spouse, the head cattleman and distaff and the cook has been dragging around all week, just barely making it. J. H. claims he has turned the corner and is up and doing every day. It will be interesting to see if Celeste makes it to the Country Club or not.

Last night's rain provided me with just the picture I wanted of the Ghana terrain so far as where water will tend to collect if not provided with a proper run-off. Although it was rather chilly, I made the most of the opportunity to stake out the place for a ditch to be dug as soon as the neighborhood has dried up a little. As you know, the Ghana garden occupies the place where once stood the great barn, the third and most easterly unit that originally was made up of the African House and Yucca. During the 150 years the great barn stood there, tons of water must have been used daily in tending to the 75 mules and cows housed in the building at one time and the constant flow of water is bound to have tended to erode considerable soil which is gradually being built up again to bring the expanse into a comparative level expanse. I hold the thought the flu bug may not reach Lyme and that the impending week end may enjoy a measure of peace.....

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Sunday, January 31st, 1960.

Memorandum:

Bright and cold on Saturday, foggy and chilly all day with a few stars out tonight with a promise for clouds and warming on the morrow.

It was such a pleasant surprise finding a letter from Lyme in Saturday's post.

Noble is the word for the lady who did such a grand job on the Library of Congress. I think the Talking Book Topics continues to appear in ink form and I shall send them along as they come to hand so that we may check, specially on the non fiction items we recommend to see if they ever make the grade.

And may I thank you especially for the clipping concerning the new Columbia Dean of Architecture, a man whom I have met but about whose new appointment I had not heard. I hadn't even heard of the Postell appointment which must date from some time back and knew about it only this week end when I got around to run through some of the pre-Christmas mail and stumbled across the Postell letter which I am enclosing under separate cover, along with a flock of other things of no great interest.

Saturday's post brought an air mail from Charleston, the message from Irma, also enclosed under separate cover. I think you will find it characteristically friendly but I suppose you will be impressed, as was I, by the omission of any reference to Kay.

The visit of Irma and Farley will be something to look forward coming week end, knowing as I do that Farley has already pictured me as having masterminded the nuptials of his sister and in view of the fact that he and Carolyn fell out so mightily. In a way,



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it seems rather ~~they~~ odd they should bother to go so far out of the way to come here but perhaps they have in mind getting information from me, making their detour worth while. I find it interesting, too, that in spite of Aunt 'illie's hatred of James, she doesn't seem to attach any of it to me. Naturally, whether she rants about James or not in letters to me, I never breathe his name in mine to her.

Satu day morning Celeste felt so much better she realized she would be able to attend the country club luncheon and more than one hundred other biddies had the same thing in mind. It was all very darling, I am told.

J. H. is still moseying a out but without any pep. He was in bed at 10 this morning when Sister and Lloyd blew in. Lloyd is returning to L. S. U. on probation. He has to have a new car and there was much talk about that. I gather, although only J. H. saw the Sabbath morning visitors since Celeste was at Church and they were gone when she returned about 11, and I, myself, never learned of their presence until after they had departed. Somehow the idea of having to have a new car on the part of the probationary student seems so strange but I gather money has never been anything the Wenks have had to worry about. I learned, too, that John leaves for school tomorrow, because there's too much hubbub at home and so he is matriculating at Johns Hopkins or some such place. He doesn't seem to have to worry about his grades as he always gets top ones in spite of the domestic turmoil in which he has found difficulty in studying.

At supper tonight, --I should have mentioned J. H. and Celeste went to town this afternoon, and at supper they reported that Joe Henry was in town, supping with Pat and Juanita B., and would be spending the night here. I illuminated the big house and touched a match to the gas in the section he will occupy.

John and Thelma were supposed to spend the afternoon with me but something happened that they couldn't make it. Some of my negro friends passed this way to ask if they might pick birds off the bamboo tonight. They say there are so many you don't have to use a gun, just pick them off the branches like one, two, three. They will get only a few hundred but I wish I might round up a few hundred thousand per man.....

10337

10333

Monday, Feburary 1st, 1900.

Memorandum:

Mostly cloudy all day but clearing tonight and withal rather on the cool side, sort of 40 like.

I saw Joe at breakfast. He was feeling gay enough and bubbling over with enthusiasm about the possibility he foresees of the Governor of Arkansas getting the Democratic nomination. How silly can some people get. He departed sometime after breakfast and so I coffee-ed alone with the lady across the fence. She said the lady doctor had given J. H. some vitamin shots Sunday afternoon. He continues to navigate slowly, however, and isn't eating anything, a prize example of how short sighted he is not to have taken a few days rest at the inception of the thing. There's a convention in Dallas this coming week and as a committeeman, he feels he should be present. I wish I could hang on to his coat tails but he would only slip out of the coat. The lady herself seems to be improving, what with cards at the Elks Club this afternoon.

Mr. Bristoe or Bristal or whatever his name is, the cattle overseer, was better yesterday but was taken to the hospital with pneumonia this morning. A couple of cows had dropped dead in the barn beyond the wood lot, I noticed this morning. Perhaps the animals have the flu, too.

I talked with Ann this afternoon. She said Ora is doing fine, she believes but suffers some pain, --I believe it was an ovary operation, and Ora is one of those problem people who can't take the usual pain killers.

Ann's girl friend, Annette Hill, --perhaps I know her and perhaps I don't, --lost her baby this morning which is probably just as well for everybody, and especially the baby itself since it was prematurely born by five months. I am surprised there was any life at all.

Ann said she went to church last evening and while she was out, the children got to romping through the house and one of them fell and had to have five stitches



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Monday, February 18, 1889

run up to close the gash in the child's head. he baby sitter called R. B., and so, as grandpa, he supervised the medical attention so that everything was in order again by the time Ann and Jack got back from church.

I forgot to mention when speaking of Mr. Bristol being in the hospital that his assistant, Bill Keller, a negro, was thrown from his horse early Sunday morning, about 5, I believe, and remained where he fell until about 10 when his horse, returning home riderless, impelled people to look for Bill whose eye had been gouged out in the fall and so he is in the hospital, too.

Today, being the 1st of the month, saw the Post Office heavily people hours before the postman would arrive with the Old Age Pension checks. Everybody seemed mighty pleased with the new checks for an additional six dollars was present in every such check throughout the State beginning today, a political gesture by the Governor who will leave it to his successor to find the additional money but will retain the advantage it may give him when he announces he will run either for the U. S. House of Representatives or the Senate. The clerk remarked that all the oldsters seemed delighted, especially those like the artist who had already borrowed the complete month's check in advance and so found themselves with the six dollars and a larger check to start borrowing against as of March 1st. In her delight, the artist must have completely forgotten that she was dialing me instead of Joe Ben Metoyer, for a while after the checks had been distributed, my phone rang and a familiar voice, apparently not recognizing mine, said:

"I done got my check...Is you makin' a round, Pa," I thought the al was going to collapse when I asked her what all that tomfoolery was about. And so February gets under way and the oldsters, not down with flu, must be mighty happy all around tonight.....

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P. S.,

If you had the good fortune to hear invitation to Learning's Anna Karenina, the following observations will be pointless. But in the event you did not get a break, you may be interested to glance through a couple of random thoughts on the discussion.

In the first place, the Chairman was Mr. Backland or some such name and Dorothy Peterson and John Fisher, Editor of Harper's Magazine. I liked all of the speakers and I am constantly falling out of my chair whenever Mr. Fisher speaks, it is so identical with that of Miss Myra Virginia Smith.

The discussion started out with the statement that this Tolstoy novel is really two novels, one about Anna and her problems, leading to disaster, and the other about Levin who with his wife, Kitty, were playing out the role of the happily wed, or at least the family attempting to establish a family that would be happy because of the efforts of Levin and Kitty. The two gentlemen seemed to think the dual themes of differing examples came off nicely while the lady didn't seem to think so although she was in raptures over the heroic qualities of the book.

It was agreed that the Levin-Kitty household was pretty much that of Herr unde Frau Tolstoy, and, assuming that it was, Tolstoy obviously didn't foresee that his own married life was heading for something pretty difficult, especially for Frau Tolstoy during the author's later years.

Assuming that the experts were correct, and there seems to be ample evidence in the book to support their theory that it is not one but two love stories, --one revolving about Anna, the other about Levin whose existences are not at all related, one cannot help asking one's self, as did I, while listening to the discussion, why somebody didn't ask if the title wasn't misleading, since "Anna Karenina" as the novel's title certainly gives no hint that, quite aside from Anna's story, there is another to which the reader, I suppose, is to give equal attention. Obviously, for the sake of clarity all around, it would certainly have been



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better if the novel, therefore had been called "Anna and Levin", inviting the reader to give attention with equal interest to the two quite unlike family careers. I well recall the first time I read Anna Karenina, I felt that the author was digressing too much in the Levin section and I was forever expecting that Levin would, sooner or later, play some major role in Anna's career which, of course, he never did. I'm inclined to think that especially during the 19th century, and especially in Russian and English novels, --I know nothing of 19th century German writers of their magnitude although I am sure they existed, there was forever a tendency among all of them, --Dostievski is especially noteworthy, in that they were forever giving unwarranted space and unnecessary details to minor characters who too frequently got out of hand, so far as the author was concerned and tended to throw the story out of balance considerably.

Back to tonight's panel, --they all agreed that Tolstoy was superb in creative ability and that he was equally deft in handling men and women. As for my own opinion in this matter, I believe with the panelists in this matter but I'm inclined to think that Tolstoy's women emerge closer to the footlights than do his men in spite of the latter's excellences. At the moment I find myself thinking especially of some of the secondary figures in the social whirl of "War and Peace". I have probably complained before that Tolstoy was so wonderful in doing the St. Petersburg society belles that I am always provoked with him when he drops them cold to pick up a flock of comparatively unimportant and not so fascinating soldiers to whom, I suppose by way of contrast, always seem much less interesting as personality creations than his glittering salonnières.

Well, that's about the gist of my reflections on tonight's discussion except to say that, as any good invitation to Learning should do, this one moved me to tell myself that I simply must re-read the volume again before long.....

SL801

19341

Tuesday, February 2nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and clammy all day with the promise of rain for the morrow. One thing is certain, the old ground hog didn't see his shadow in these parts today and so I suppose we may anticipate the arrival of Spring within the next 6 weeks, --sa, --about March 21st, as usual.

J. H. continues moseying along at reduced speed and eating little or nothing. I saw him in his office this morning. He said he was feeling pretty good which is just his way of avoiding the truth by admitting he felt like Hell.

But, as usual, he sticks doggedly to the positive side telling me that he had seen a physician yesterday. The latter told him that usually the flu drags along for two weeks and then stops but that if he wished to take some fancy medicine, he could guarantee him that under favorable circumstances, the medicine would put him back on his feet within 14 days.

Lythe Rand and Joan Frantz were today's visitors. Blythe has a new Oldsmobile, --I think she would like the old part of the spelling, and seemed to be in quite gay spirits.

She wants me to round up some of my colored friends and have them get her a flock of black birds which they are to skin and clean and put in the deep freeze. She wants to make a big old black bird pie at the camp and wants me to come to sample her handiwork, along with some of her other friends.

She said Ed Rand is just out of bed after a two week go at flu but that the rest of the family seem to have escaped it.

She said her lawyer son-in-law of Shreveport had been in Court on the day a week or two back when Sister



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February 3rd, 1960.

came to seek out his professional services. During his absence, or rather because of his absence, the lady enlisted the services of one of his partners. What she wanted was to get back her license from the Police Department, the license having been taken up when Sister was the cause of the three way car wreck. Her reason for having to have the license was because she had to drive her blind husband to his office. Heretofore one of his nurses has been acting in the capacity of chauffeur. I suppose the absence of the license, --she had not obtained it last week, accounted for the presence of her son as driver of the car that made the trip to Baton Rouge and back last week end.

If I should know Blythe for a hundred years, I should never hope to anticipate her reactions to any point two days in succession. She got a glimpse of the Hana garden whose main layout she could imagine and she volunteered the opinion that she liked it. I knew perfectly well in advance that she wouldn't but, as of today, at least, I was mistaken. When the flowers and vegetables get going, however it may very well be a different tune but as of now it all sounds so out of character for one whose ability to propagate flowers and whose ability to fashion a garden is almost identical with Carrie's inclinations and abilities in the same line of endeavor. Both have green thumbs, love to work in the good earth and never has either seen beyond the outlines of a single, superb plant, so far as its relation to the balance of the planted place.

Today's post was thin, only Baton Rouge coming through and that without much news. I continue to marvel that I hear nothing from anyone concerned with the "Garden in the Forest" film but sometimes I think nobody in that entire set up has much notice or concept of sheer interest in getting across what they are trying to do...

10343

14801

Wednesday, February 3rd, 1960.

Memorandum:

It rained all day but as the thermometer remained in the 50's, it wasn't so bad. The radio this morning mentioned that Lyme was at 19 and that was air-ish. I saw five or six children having the time of their young lives this afternoon, wading knee deep in mud puddles. It struck me as an excellent past time for cultivating flu in view of the present super-abundance of that malady.

Yesterday I knocked off a column for Thursday, the 11th, under the title of "Spare the Saw and spoil the Crepe Myrtle." I take it the mental picture of a crepe myrtle must have remained in my mind for last night. I dreamed of turning the pages in the big old Duke of Anhalt book of Chateaur Royales and, to my surprise, instead of being in black and white, all the pages were in color and in nearly every garden there were big crepe myrtles in full flower. I must try my hand at grandiflora or some such and see what the dream world can do about that.

Carmen called me about mid morning. She wanted to read me a letter, signed by the Hodges steward, C. B. Byrd, but apparently issued from Ola Mae's office. It was addressed to members of the board of El Camino Real and stated that the board meeting, scheduled for tomorrow would have to be put off one week, --the 11th, -- since the present epidemic of flu had made it impossible to complete the film of The Garden in the Forest which was planned for the impending board meeting. Carmen went on to say, following the reading of the letter, that her aunt, Mattie Breazeale, had come to see her last night and was full of particulars about a delightful trip she had had to Shreveport visiting Cora Lee Perkins, nee Henry, who, either Monday or Tuesday, had invited her to attend a luncheon at the Department Club, one of the more exclusive in Shreveport. She said all Aunt Mattie could talk about was the wonderful picture shown at the luncheon,

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a film called *Garden in the Forest*, and that after the presentation, she had met the director, a Miss Carolyn Ramsey, who had asked her if she might be any kin to Miss Carmen.

From this information, I suppose we may assume several things, including the fact that Carolyn is up and doing, the film is being shown and that either C. . Byrd or Ola Mae or somebody ought to think of something better by way of an excuse for delaying the board member presentation than the fact that the picture isn't finished.

Early last week, I wrote Carolyn a note, telling her I had laid the foundation for her contact with Senator Sylvan Friedman when he and wife and guests dropped by here, for, as I may have mentioned to you, the Senator is on the Committee of Tourism that will be handing out film contracts shortly. Carolyn has been so busy trying to get her *Garden in the Forest* film finished, I suppose, and you can smile if you wish, that she hasn't had time to acknowledge my memo to her on the Senator Friedman matter or to acknowledge a communication sent her the day following her telephone call from Clarence sometime early in January. In short, the Rocket is a bag.

At breakfast this morning, the clerk said that J. H. didn't look well and wasn't getting over his flu. At coffee, Celeste was quite happy and confided that J. H. was so much better. I saw him at supper where he ate almost nothing and said he must be getting old, he felt so triflin'. I am forever being astonished at the brilliance of people in one field, their folly in another, and I must say he is a splendid example.

I hear a great whirring of wings from the white garden. I reckon some of my friends must be rounding up birds for Blythe's pie. The robins are beginning to come in with the first week in February and it seems to me such a crime to use them for food, even though they and the black birds have piled up so much work for me in the straightening out of the hedges that I suppose my pity will have evaporated before I get through with the hedges which cannot be undertaken for another six weeks after the birds have gone. Next year I may do out down the hedges in December and that may simplify or complicate the problem.....

64801

10345

Thursday, 4th, 1960.

Memorandum:

This morning the Shreveport Weather Bureau said there was all kinds of weather for anyone's taking, and so it turned out to me, -- much clouds, some dark and ominous, some light and promising, some rain, some sun and withal fairly mild.

His morning's post brought me a letter from Magnolia, written and signed by Mat Hertzog, to all people. I didn't know he ever wrote letters as he has never responded to any of my congratulatory nature which I have occasion to pen to him on occasion.

As both his mama and his wife, Dee, never fail to embrace me when our paths meet, I found his tone a little formal when he addressed me as Dear Sir.

He said he had read my column about St. Isadore with interest. He said further that he resented and he felt sure many other Catholics resented my reference to the Melrose Catholic Church, -- he called it the Ile Brevelle Church, as the church of the children of Strangers. He said I knew the name of the Ile Brevelle Church and he hoped I would use the proper name in writing it. He signed himself Yours truly.

I may or may not respond but if I do, I shall probably thank him for his expressed interest, recall that Celeste who gave him the statue and who is a member of the Church of the Children or Strangers volunteered her delight with the article, leading me to assume she didn't resent anything in it too much. I may refresh his memory that the land and the church were given by children of strangers, that it is known by that name in various historical and literary works and on various artifacts and that the priest who heads the institution, the correct name being St. Augustin's Church, often refers to it as the Church of the Children of Strangers and then invite him to see the of that church in Father Callahan's writings and other articles in the Catholic press. I shall not add that I have been interested in the title of land adjoining the Church property, belonging to Josephine Hertzog, colored, and sister of Henry Hertzog, also



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colored, who is the offspring of Mat's uncle, Henry Hertzog. Over years, I have been told by various intimates of the Hertzog family that all of the male members appear to be so jealous of Melrose and poor Mat must have been moved by such a silly impulse to write about something having nothing to do with the relative attributes of Maganolia and Melrose.

I was sorry to learn today that Ora has been disappointed in her failure to recuperate as quickly as she had hoped and still is in the hospital with a tube of some sort imbedded for drainage.

I dropped Blythe a line today, advising her that her birds are awaiting her pleasure in the store's deep freeze. The hedges are apparently all quiet tonight in pursuance of word I put out that the gardens were closed to poachers from Magnolia the Cohen place, etc., for last night several cars came from several miles around, each filled with bird hunters who, unacquainted with the Melrose gardens, tromped down rare bushes, broke huge limbs from grandiflora magnolias and generally added mightily to the wreckage wrought by the birds.

By way of conserving his energies, J. H. spent this morning in Alexandria and possibly the afternoon as well. He leave for Dallas by midnight or 1 a.m. train. Celeste will be staying with her mama at the hospital as between now and Tuesday and thus I shall again be able to assume my office of Master of the Hound.

At supper tonight, J. H. ate next to nothing but seemed in a gay frame of mind over Wenk doings. He said Sister called him last night in a fine stew. It seems she had just been notified by her car insurance had been cancelled and she was furious and, I suppose, as usual, wanted somebody to do something about it in her favor but, I gather, nobody was doing anything. J. H. said further that John was back from his trip East, finding it difficult to make a collegiate change in the middle of the semestre. He will continue his work at Centenary College in Shreveport but, instead of living at home, will become a resident of the college, thus getting out from under the parental roof where the high-jinks continues at it same old mad tempo.

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10347

Friday, February 5th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy with a brisk west wind and not much warming following the radio weather report at 7 this morning, stating it was 39 in Lyme and 43 here.

Today's mail was fairly heavy, the bulk of it being trash stuff of no interest.

There was some sort of a note from the Rocket which I shall enclose if I can find. I acknowledged it forthwith, admitting I had received the threat that she might honor me with a visit but assuring her that I did not cringe at the news, having heard the cry to often of "Wolf, wolf".

I talked with The Enterprise for a moment this morning and was interested to learn that Mat had ordered several copies of The Enterprise last Saturday, --the copy containing the St. Isadore thing, leading The Enterprise to assume that he must have liked it enough to want to send it to various people, only to have some one subsequently tell him the Church of the Children of Strangers was all wrong.

And that reminds me that a copy of the Houston Chronicle came to hand today containing an article about Miss Hunter. I ran through it in kangaroo fashion but seem to remember that the Chronicle, too, referred to the church as that of the Children of Strangers. Well, I reckon Mat doesn't see the Houston papers so he will not be upset by that.

Had I seen Celeste today, I should have shown her Mat's letter and a copy of my response but she did not get down from town. I shall save the correspondence for her delectation because she and Mat's wife, Dee, are such intimate friends, it may be just as well that Celeste see the correspondence before she hears about it from Mat, now that he turns out to be more Catholic than the Pope.



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I had a question put to me that almost knocked me flat. I must remember to pass it along to James, too, for I think he would love it as much as little Miss Lee. After shaking the grapevine the other evening, notifying the river that only Melrose folks might hunt birds in the gardens, rumor got round that I had put my foot down on everybody, including Melrose inhabitants. This afternoon Ezra came to me to ask if this was so. I told him it was not and that I hope all his neighbors and kinfolks would keep right on reducing the swarms. About 8 o'clock tonight, well after dark, two colored gentlemen knocked at my door. It was Ezra's uncle-in-law and one of the Little River negroes named Remo. I asked them what I could do for them, thinking they were going to ask if they might gather some birds but to my surprise, they asked if they might talk with me about that subject. I invited them in and after a few preliminaries, we got right down to business. They said that Ezra had told them there was no objection to them on my part, so far as gathering up birds was concerned and they were glad of that but they wondered if I had issued any instructions to the birds. I couldn't help giggling but I could see easily enough that they were quite serious. I asked them to elaborate. They said they had accepted what Ezra had told them as being straight from me and accordingly had got rigged up in their old clothes, fortifying themselves with their sacks and their headlights and had come to get some birds for a gumbo but, after combing the magnolia trees and hedges, hadn't been able to discover a single bird and they wondered if I had put word out for the birds to stay away. I paused to giggle again. It was obvious, however, that the two gentlemen were quite serious and I assured them that I hadn't communicated with the birds and, --smart me, --suggested that they come with me to the back gallery where I would show them a couple of magnolias heavily laden with the feathered hosts. I thought they glanced at each other as much as to say "He's crazy but let's humor him", and so I escorted them to the back gallery, clapped my hands just once, and, instead of the mighty whirl of wings, you could have heard a pin drop, and I almost fell out myself. We went on to the hedges and not a sign of a bird. Three million since December and tonight n'er a bird.

It's too good, I suppose, to hope they have be-taken themselves elsewhere permanently but if they have and if we can get some soaking rains to wash away some of their roostings, perhaps I can begin putting things back to order. And now this bird must get busy.....

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10349

Sunday, February 7th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Two days of lovely, sunny and moony skies and the thermometer on the rather mild side.

February 5th came and went and nothing turned up, as threatened, from the Farley O'Briens. And so, on Saturday morning around 10, when I dashed out of my door madly to reach the Post Office before the postman had departed, I bumped slap into Irma and Farley. I thought they looked much as usual but later the clerk told me he had seen them and would not have recognized Farley because his hair had turned white.

They were the bearers of love from Aunt Willie, a bottle of jelly from Jean O'Brien and much cakes, wine and things from themselves. They also mentioned having talked on the 'phone with Kay, and all this before we had gone inside and from that mention of an inhabitant of Baton Rouge, nothing more was said by them, and I never brought up the topic.

They wanted to read me from Farley's manuscript about Marie Therese and they wanted to skip up to Briarwood and they wanted to see Ghana. I suggested, over a cup of mid morning port that we go see Ghana and then they go on to Briarwood, what with the afternoon promising so pretty and they suggested that I meet them in town for dinner and I suggested we all return here for manuscript reading, and we did just that.

At Ghana Irma, bearing camera, wanted to get some shots of the frieze but what with the shadow so intense and the angle from the ground so pronounced, she decided she couldn't. They asked if Carolyn or anybody had ever taken the frieze and I said that I had hoped Carolyn would make a round to do just that before it was put up but that I hadn't seen her and that she had never seen the frieze, a fact that seemed to startle them. Even as in the case of Baton Rouge people, so this mention of Carolyn was the only one made during their Cane River visit. I respected them for not fishing in my pond and I must most particular not to muddy theirs and the fish that might be swimming in either pool. Only once while we were at Ghana, I skirted just a little along the margin of the pools, if they cared to interpret it as such when, in speaking of Miss Ormon and her one time work



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with Iris at Hodges, I remarked that Carrie and A. J. were classic examples in my lexicon of perfectly grand souls, each of whom I treasured with equal depth but for quite different reason who, by some twist of fate, some hidden chemical antipathy or whatever, simply couldn't get on together whenever they came within the other's range, that I blamed neither party in such cases and that I didn't blame Carrie for giving up Hodges and didn't blame Hodges for giving up Carrie and that was that and I hope they applied it to Baton Rouge at least.

I met them in town for supper, after which we came here until midnight. I asked Farley to read and he didn't need encouragement. After one chapter, as a gesture of courtesy, he hesitated before going on but Irma, who must be possessed of unique fortitude, urged him to go on and he did and, marvelous to relate, I didn't fall asleep. In a letter tonight to James, I mentioned that what I heard of the novel struck me as an interesting story, related with great lucidity. The second chapter deals with Marie Therese birth in the Congo, her early years, the mating of boys and girls and I thought the details of sex matters, although beautifully handled, went into too much detail and stretched through too many paragraphs. Farley said that only about a quarter of the book remained to be written and I congratulated him and urged him to drive straight to the end without forcing it. We said goodnight under a bright moon at the front gate, kissing goodbye, --Irma, not Farley, and they were gone and that was that. The Atomic Energy Commission is setting off blasts deep in the salt mines near Winfield, some 35 miles north east of this bend of the Severn Michigan scientists and 5 or 6 British scientists are measuring earth tremors and so on, experimenting, as I understand it, to see what sort of checks can be made on Soviet underground atomic explosions. They went around Robin Hood's Barn to see about a visit here and I arranged one for them this afternoon and it was all very pleasant. They seemed fascinated by what they had to see and I was equally entranced by what I had to hear so everyone was pleased. After they had departed, Dr. and Mrs. Ware came by appointment. He is Northwestern's chief horticulturalist and his wife was interested in doing some painting and that was all pleasant enough, too. Celeste had come down for dinner and after we had dined, she returned to town and so I am enjoying my solitude thoroughly and so the week ran out and a new week begins.....

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Monday, February 8th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Clear and mild with magnolia blossoms unfolding at the tops of the trees, getting themselves "all sot" to be knocked silly along about Thursday when another cold spell is predicted.

The mud puddles have gone but the earth remains pleasantly moist, giving me just the proper ingredients for a dab of transplanting. Accordingly I set out a row of nandinas along the fence on the north side of the Ghana garden, giving on the cotton patch beyond and neatly balancing the long row of crepe myrtles framing the south side of the place. I even got around to dig some sizeable crepe myrtles to be given to the new hospital in town which seems to be going in heavily for planting if no for landscaping. From what I hear of operations in that quarter, I gather the job will present the impression of a Dormon planting but that will be alright since most people don't know what if they are getting a maximum or minimum effect in putting plants into the ground.

It was nice hearing from Robina. From what she had to report, I gather that somebody must have been mixed up about the program planned by the Department Club. Off hand, it would seem to me unlikely that the Club would have called on anyone to review a book several years old since such groups, made up for the most part, I suspect, of people who never crack a book, would scarcely take anything less than a book slap off the press. Personally, I have no doubt that the Ramsey film has beautiful scenes in it and I'm therefore vaguely surprised that the lady Robina mentions should have felt she had been enticed to the meeting under false pretenses or that she should have been disappointed in seeing what was shown.

In answering the letter from Down South magazine, I inserted a carbon, thinking I would send the duplicate along to you but, as I signed the letter, it occurred



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dawned on me that I had possibly written a column without knowing it and so, instead of enclosing it herewith, I put a title on the piece under the prosaic heading of "Letter to the Editor" and sent the aforesaid duplicate to the Enterprise instead so that you may be able to read it anyway, a couple of weeks hence, this coming Thursday's column having to do with crepe myrtles.

Carmen called today to report she had just received another letter from El Camino Real. I think I may have mentioned that the Spring of Garden in the Forest, scheduled for last Thursday, had been postponed until this Thursday but now the latest letter again postpones the meeting until a week from this coming Thursday.. How Messrs Hodges and Byrd, Mesdames Word and Ramsey run their business, I know not and I'm glad I'm mixed up in their operations no more than I am.

In connection with the last statement, however, I might add that I did receive a 'phone call from Millspaugh's, stating that Miss Word had left a quantity of Calico Cook Books and Primitive note paper with them for sale last October but, although they had requested invoices by mail, they had never received any and asked me if I had the power to issue same. I told them I should be glad to assume the power whether it was mine or not. Two other houses in town called me last week, voicing the same problem. All this takes on a peculiar charm inasmuch as I never fail to get a bill the same day merchandise is supplied me from the duertising Mart.

I may have mentioned that a few months ago I did a little spade work with the Pecan Growers Association and received their tentative agreement to underwrite the publication of a Pecan Cook Book.. The contract was to be signed on February 28th in Hatcher at the gathering of the Pecan Board there at that time. I can imagine nothing more advantageous to a publisher than to have an edition underwritten, --check paid in advance with profit to boot, and yet I have been unable either to contact or get a line from La Mae about this matter. Strange, indeed, are the methods of the Hodges, Byrd, Ramsey Word combination.

Well, so much for fulminations at this sitting and I shall

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Tuesday, February 9th, 1960.

Memorandum;

High winds, high thermometer and high jinks generally, without a cloud in the sky. It was 89 at Dallas in, in spite of the spanking breezes here, up in the 80's.

J. H. returned from Dallas last night. His voice is so husky I find difficulty in understanding him. He continues dragging around in spite of his flu.

At dinner this noon, we were J. H., --Clete having gone to the country club, the clerk, a couple of pecan experts and myself. I was mildly taken aback when the clerk announced that Mat Hertzog was quite mad at me for having written something or other in a recent column. I had not mentioned the letter to the clerk or J. H. The clerk said that some colored people from the Melrose area were in the store this morning, reporting that Mat, who hates colored folks, was complaining bitterly that I was insulting the (ane) iver mulattoes in my column. Imagine.

Today's post was remarkably uninteresting but I shall send along a couple of samples regardless.

On the visitor's side, there was one delightful caller, Judge Joseph McGreden or McGreson or some such, of the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals. He was returning from Court in New Orleans to his home in Jefferson, Texas and stopped off for a look-see. His height, his manners, his consideration reminded me so much of Lyle and his erudition was inspirational. We discovered we had mutual friends in Jefferson, La Kuntz and others, and he has known Carolyn for years but somehow had never heard anyone speak of Melrose until somebody in New Orleans asked him if he knew me and when he said he didn't, he had to go on and confess he didn't know Melrose.

We had such a pleasant go-round and such a pleasant chat



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afterwards, over a glass of port. On occasion in the past, he has had cases with the Shreveport Jacks which brought in another tie.

He is about to become a grandfather on his daughter's side, his only son having died some years ago. I remember having heard of the Judge for, as I recall, he was and still is the youngest judge ever to hold forth in Texas, having arrived at that post when either 22 or 23, if I remember correctly which certainly does seem almost infantile to be putting on the wool sack. Perhaps the trait, most like Lyle, was demonstrated when he got up to go. He said there would be some respite from Court duties in March, that he felt he could speak both for himself and his wife, although I never met the lady, and that he would like to have me come up to Jefferson to spend a prolonged week end as their guest which I thought indicative of his sweetness. Naturally, I am not deterred, although I am not at all certain of being in the Jefferson area but it will certainly be a pleasure to hear from the Judge.

I must say I am indebted to the Judge for having said something which probably explains something asked by Sigman Byrd of the Houston Chronicle which struck me as either impertinent or incomprehensible. The judge was perfectly delighted with all the gourds suspended on the Yucca gallery and the constant thumping noises they were making because of the brisk breeze and he made the point pleasantly clear. When the Houston Byrd was here, he simply asked:

"Is this house haunted?"

I don't remember if the wind was blowing or not when Byrd was here but tonight, as the gourds clatter away at a great rate, I assume that perhaps the wind was blowing on that occasion and possibly that is what impelled the question. Be that as it may, a warring moon rides high tonight in a cloudless sky as the wind whistles up from the Gulf and the racket on the gallery goes on apace. And mention of Byrd reminds me to remark that the black birds are still gone and it's wonderful.....

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Wednesday, February 11th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudless and cool, thanks to a twist in the wind from south to northwest.

We had been promised rain but it all got dumped in States to the North, Oklahoma, Arkansas, etc. Our breezes remained constant in the south until midnight, clattering the gourds endless and even taking the roof off the convent across the river but it didn't do any harm on this side of the stream. Shreveport measured the low barometer reading of 28.07. Once before, --in 1902, -- it sagged to 28.04. But throughout all yesterday, last night and today, the skies remained cloudless in this area, except for a dab of dust from Texas now and then, and tonight the moon is as big and golden as a burnished wash tub.

Some of the college boys who had confessed to nine break-ins and robberies received their sentences from the Court today, --3 years, -----suspended. I must pass that news along to James who, I feel certain, will agree with you and me that it is comparatively mild in contrast to the untutored negro who got six years for lifting a cow. Lucky the negro didn't steal 9 cows, I must say.

I saw Celeste at coffee. She seemed more tense than any time since November. She didn't attend the Board meeting of the Hysterical Ladies and the election of this year's officers. There was the luncheon at the country club, followed by bridge and as the meeting was at 5, she simply couldn't do everything.

She rather surprised me by saying she hoped her mama would be able to come home by the end of February. Nobody else seems to entertain such a hope and one wonders.

I feel chafed by the radio this week since Invitation to Learning didn't make the air waves this week. I'm glad I heard last week's go at the old story. I forget what was scheduled for this week and so I console myself by saying that I probably wouldn't have known what they were talking about anyway.



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As I turned the page, two thoughts struck me, first, that I probably dated this memo the 11th instead of the 10th as I should have, and secondly that I wanted to figure out tonight if I could about how much vegetable seed I was going to want for the Ghana garden. I accordingly did nothing about the date but I did go for a little stroll through the garden, a little old black Grandpa clattering up every step. The garden was so pretty under the full moon. . . . Vaguely I figured the part I want to plant with vegetables in about 200 feet in width and perhaps 300 feet in length. By some random guess, I concluded that I would be planting about a thousand feet of lettuce, carrots, beets and an equal footage in okra and corn, 500 feet for mustard greens, 600 feet of onions and about the same footage for tomato plants, egg plants and belle peppers. J. H. mentioned at supper that if I wanted any seed in quantity, he could obtain same readily enough and I shall supply him with a list on the morrow. It seems to me I can already hear the rabbits on sighting a thousand feet of lettuce and carrots that they have never had it so good. It seems to me I can hear the clerk saying nobody could possibly use so many vegetables, if he catches sight of the list and it seems to me I can see J. H. buying about double the amount for each item and that will provide me with an opportunity to plant the whole place a second time in deep summer in anticipation of another line of vegetables for autumn. But with the above assortment of vegetables, I shall be able to make them form pretty borders for zinnias and other old fashioned flowers and I'm certainly glad I saved tons of zinnia seed from last year's flowerings.

I wonder if you are finding all the defense talks currently going on in Washington as incomprehensible as do I. As so often happens on the political front, so now in the defense section, all the experts seem to disagree and what the poor layman is to make out of all the blasts and counter-blasts, I cannot imagine. It did seem to me, however, that there was some relation to all this chatter and a line I heard on some crack pot program last night, the program being in the hands of one of those crack pot Bible slappers who never fail to fascinate me by their tomfoolery, albeit they all seem to be might serious. The gentleman to whom I was listening was calling on all his listeners to join in the battle against sin, bring his oration to a climax with the stirring admonition:

"Now is the time to buckle on your sword, grab your shield and jump into the firing line!"

Smile.....

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Tuesday, February 11th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Another blue and gold day but a little on the chill side, --sort of 40 like. Tomorrow we are promised some rain.

I coffee-ed across the fence and found the lady quite chipper. There's a wedding on Saturday in Mansura, meaning she will be heading down that way on the morrow and returning at the end of the week, I suppose, following the reception. The prospect seems to afford so much delight, it is quite inspiring to see what the prospect of a dab of road running will do.

The enclosed letter from Miss Wier speaks for itself. It is certainly unusual for a person, unacquainted with anyone in this region to write anything like it. I responded forthwith and have attached my letter to a package containing a Hunter primitive which I think the lady deserves for having felt the impulse to pen such a note. I reckon she must have read the article in the Houston Chronicle wherein the reporter mentioned that on the day he stopped by her house, she was m without materials.

The in-coming mail continues light. It seems to me James has been less communicative during the past 10 days. Perhaps he has been waiting to learn about the O'Brien visit which I reported in a Sunday letter which he must have had on Tuesday. Perhaps he is busy with his Isaac Erwin material. I hold the thought there may be no scuffling going on around the family hearth.

It is said J. H. is getting back a little color and that his appetite is improving and I am glad I was interested to learn, not from him, for he never speaks of such matters, that Madam Regard's hospital bills are running around two thousand a month. I still think there's something altogether cock-eyed about hospitalization charges.



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With all the talk on the radio about the Russians visiting New Delhi makes me wonder how Helen is making out, if she is in India and when we shall be hearing from her. Surely, she must be busy enough, traveling in the Far East being a full time job in itself, it is said, not to mention the articles she is probably doing for the Waco Tribune-Times. I hope she has the good sense to let personal letters go by the board until she is back home again.

A letter or rather a copy of the Natchez Democrat came to hand today, carrying an article about Miss Nellie's memory being honored by the Historical Society. As the paper bore no name of sender, I have no doubt it probably was forwarded by Mrs. Moore, although the fact that the cancellation was from Washington, Miss., it is possible that some of the Drakes may have sent it. If I can set hand to it, I shall enclose it with today's Enterprise.

In pursuance of news tonight, stemming from Nevada regarding diggings going on there in anticipation of future underground blasts, I naturally recalled last Sunday's visitors, wondering if the radio is talking about Nevada with a view to playing Louisiana underground tests are not to be dreamed of. It seems to me I have heard something about the Winfield tests during the past month on radio news reports but I'm not certain. One convenience about the salt mines is the fact that at least no digging has to be done prior to setting off those blasts.

In what might be described as the height of something or other, Mr. Walker reported today that a girl, living almost within the shadow of the college in town, cannot finish the last semester of her college career because, through lack of money, she must live at home and as the nearest college for students of color is Baton Rouge, it appears she will be unable to graduate in June. I suggested that all of us had better get busy to see what we could do and said I would call back, as someone was tapping at my door. It was a Shreveport number who occasionally buys a primitive but day she bought two, much to my delight, for I could telephone as soon as she left that at least one contribution would be forth-coming, and it will be interesting to see if enough should be pledged to

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Friday, February 27th, 1960.

Memorandum:

27 outside but cosey enough inside.

J. H. left for Alexandria this morning about 8:30, taking a plane from there to New Orleans, with a view to flying back to Alexandria around 9 or 10 tonight and then driving back here.

Celeste left at 8:45 this morning, too, heading out for Mansura and tomorrow morning's wedding, after which she plans to return home.

Blythe is due to preside at Lafayette's Camellia Show, including tonight's ball, I suppose, and tomorrow's and Sunday's festivities, but.....

About 9 this morning it began to snow and it has kept right on snowing ever since.

You never saw anything more remarkable, I guess, than what was to be seen this afternoon all over the place. The snow, perhaps 6 inches in depth, is of the soft variety that clings to whatever it touches, including its brother snowflakes, and the Chinese magnolias, each wearing a high white hat, stands on branches of white Cararra six inches thick and you can't tell where the snow leaves off and the big house begins.

Of course most of the bushes, bamboo, etc., not flattened during the past couple of months by the birds, seem flat enough now and the big oak and grandiflora are sagging perilously.

About 5, the clerk called me from the store to say the cook had just called him to say she wouldn't be coming to give supper and so I went to the store to get something for tonight and had quite as marvelous a trip as I can ever remember having taken.

Whether J. H. will be able to land at Alexandria tonight, I know not but, after leaving the store, I went by his house to discharge my services as Master of the Hound.



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I had difficulty getting on to the gallery, what with the snow having bend down the sweet olive bushes on each side of the walk, making the passage closed. But I was glad I went by the front door, what with my discovery that the gallery had been transformed into an aviary where about 500 or 600 birds were darting back and forth and generally littering up the furniture and floor. I know not how long they had been there or how they could have gained entry but there they were and getting them out was really quite a job, what with the screen doors opening on to the sweet olives blocking the way.

I know not how long I was engaged in the business but long enough to persuade Emmet and Erwin that it was their supper time and, hearing the commotion, they had come over through the snow to see what was cooking. I couldn't see them, being the same color as the snow and their feet concealed in the fluff but they followed me home without me having to call them.

I write at 9 and it is still snowing. At 1 this noon, the Shreveport Weather Bureau predicted no snow for Shreveport but said there was a band of the stuff falling from Many south below Alexandria. It certainly would be odd if there was no flurry 100 miles to the North.

I was pleasantly surprised this morning when Ora telephoned me. She seemed to be in the best of spirits and had no end of hospital adventures to report, so many, in fact, that I never did get around to ask her when she got home. It is my understanding that she will remain in bed for some time, for it appears that there was a cancer and the operation rather delicate but she is busy writing stories about her experiences, all on the humorous side and she asked me if Celeste would drive me up for an afternoon next week so that she might read them to me and get some opinions. She said she had tried them on R. B. but his legal mind precludes fiction. She said he had a 'phone installed at her bed so she might chat with me but the disadvantages of a party line make talking very long impossible.

I'm planning on quite a grand evening all in all. There's a potato baking in the Dutch oven and there seems to be quite a lot of stuff I like, such as crackers and cheese, bread and Dormon cake and I know not what all. I have a lot of work to do, including a column about the birds and in lieu of ice cream, I shall step out on the gallery to view the snow whenever I get drowsie-like.....

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Sunday, February 14th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Deep blue skies Saturday and today with a brilliant sun that melted snow from the trees but left the local landscape with a blanket of white about six inches thick. Alexandria's temperature at 7 this morning was 14, Shreveport's at 29, and the Shreveport station announced that dwellers in that city might view snow if they cared to drive 30 miles south. Alexandria remains blanketed.

I must say I think J. H. extremely short sighted so far as his health is concerned. Friday's snow continued without a let up from 9 a.m. Friday until 5 o'clock Saturday morning. As planes were grounded, J. H. hoped a ride to Alexandria from the rescent city. At the air port, he got his car and headed out in this direction. The hour was 3 on Saturday morning and he got as far as the spillway before the snow proved too much. Then he 'phoned an overseer and thus got to the store at 6 a.m. I could scarcely understand a word he said at dinner or supper yesterday. His voice seemed fairly normal today, however.

Celeste remained in Mansura until Saturday afternoon when the roads had been opened and so made it back here by sunset.

I headed out toward the post office at the usual hour on Saturday, realizing I would probably be hours ahead of the mail which would undoubtedly be slowed up by the snow. But I was wrong, for the postman had already come and gone, meaning that my Friday night's mail will not go forward until Monday morning along with this. It seems the trucks or trains or whatever that bring the mail had failed to arrive on Saturday morning and so the postman had left empty handed and made the rounds merely to pick up the out-going mail from the various stations but, being a couple of hours ahead of the usual schedule, there was mighty little for him to take.

Some secretaries finally thawed out a little and I got a few letters read. It seems to have been flu that held up letter writing on the part of James. I had rather expected something from Kay as I had written her twice while she was in South Carolina but letter writing doesn't seem easy for her. The letter from the Lost Word seems to be the longest I can remember. The enclosure she



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speaks of arrived just in time to be endorsed and sent on to aid the senior college student, prevented from attending college in her home town because of her pigmentation. I never wrote a piece about the African House to better advantage, it would seem. The best thing about the forwarding of the enclosure is that I can do so through the enterprise so that the student of whom I had never heard before will never know at least one of the contributors to the educational fund.

Thanks to the snow, I got a little extra reading done this week end. I concentrated on the February Readers Digest and was glad to find a few new Talking Books listed. I ordered John Glasworth's "InChancery" and Moss Hart, "Act One".

The article about the Lincoln murder mystery was an interesting review which pointed clearly enough to Secretary of War Stanton as the probable chief villain in the whole sorry business.

Ora called me at 7 this morning. I must say she always seems especially animated and unusually mentally vigorous when flattened out by an operation. She hoped Celeste might drive me in one day this week, preferably in the morning, to attend her reading of her manuscript. She says R. B. is more anxious than ever that she should make the European jaunt, --if not this summer, at least in the following. She said I. S. Willard had telephoned her last night after talking with me and had remarked that she was going to Europe in 1861 and how nice it would be if they could travel together. I suggested that they plan their trip so that I. S. Willard can concentrate on the archives in Provence while Ora is attending Oxford or Cambridge, giving each a chance to be alone during a portion of the prolonged summer. Oray sayeth further that the lady doctor had been to see her, had remarked upon Mat's letter and had told Ora that she liked all my columns just as much as Mat appears not to have liked at least one.

I find myself wondering how Blythe made out in her Lafayette camellias in snowbanks week and one advantage of the snow for has been the absence of road runners which is understandable enough....

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Monday, February 15th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, 50-ish and drizzling this evening. I hold the thought the drizzle may dissolve some of the snow.

Twenty billion fascents of Valentine remembrances arrived by today's post instead of Saturday which certainly would have come to hand then, had there been any mail at all.

The card, its decors, the gay piece about the bay leaves are just grand and the portrait such a promise of delight for the Arenbourg birthday.

Last night spoke with so much fervor about the lovely Valentine gracing her mama's mirror at the hospital which she had wanted to bring me to see but which she couldn't remove from her mama's room since the latter lady set such high store by it. And hour later when I gathered up my own mail at the Post Office, I could, in a way, appreciate the Regard enthusiasm but it was obvious enough to me that, without anyone but little Miss Lee and me knowing about it, mine outshone the Regard item two billion times over. Anyway you look at it, today was a pure St. Valentine's Day and I love it all because of Lyme.

There was a card, enclosed, from Mildred Cunningham, signed "Secret Admirer", a name she borrowed from a birthday greeting I had sent her on January 14th, for I always send her a greeting on that day because she and Miss Cammie always exchanged greetings on the 14th, it being the natal day of both ladies. It seems odd that almost a month elapsed before Mildred figured out the original "Secret Admirer".

In today's post came an envelope containing a somewhat laconic note and a one dollar bill. Since the note, as you see, requested that the dollar bill be handed to the artist, I called the later to tell her she was a dollar richer than before.



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I don't recall if I mentioned last week that the Post Master had handed me a letter from a Dallas lady, expressing a wish to provide the artist with painting materials. Perhaps I sent the letter to you and perhaps not. If I did, and if you can discover the name and address of this Dallas lady, I should appreciate your kindness in jotting it down for me. Perhaps I simply threw away the letter. As I recall, the letter was typed but the address on the envelope was not. Be that as it may, I wrote a couple of pages to the lady, explaining how the artist has poor judgement about the prices she gets for her pictures, my efforts to lend a hand occasionally, and, in appreciation of the lady's inquiry, I told her I was sending a Hunter primitive as a gesture of appreciation. I take it that the enclose communication stems from that correspondent but it seems odd that an artist, as she described herself, would think that a dollar would go very far in buying paints, boards or brushes, and since this note is not typed, I'm wondering if the original letter, --the one to the Post Master, was contrived by someone else on behalf of the writer. I should so much like to think that in reality, the letters have come from somebody of the same race and aspirations as the artist for whom the dollar was sent.. I might ask Daisy in the Dell to make inquiry, were I able to recall the name of the person.

A call from the Parish Library today had to do with entertaining a flock of librarians here sometime in May. As most of the Parishes represented are hill billy, I look forward to the reception with scant enthusiasm, having known so many librarians who never cracked a book in the first place, and so many Louisiana librarians who pretty much represent the cultural short-comings of the Parishes in which they reside.

I was provoked again tonight when the New Orleans CBS station cheated me again by not presenting Invitation to Learning. I hope the same thing doesn't happen next week, the third denial in a row, enabling me to recall the Currier and Ives print of the nurse maid, pushing the straw hat down over the eyes of little Gertie, as the policeman kisses the maid who is saying:

"This is the third time I have told you to put your hat on properly."  
smile.

Edith Porter's letter is dull enough but I

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Tuesday, February 16th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and in the 40's, but somehow warm enough to melt quite a lot of snow, praise the Lord.

Ora called me this morning to ask me to lunch with her and R. B. at their home on the morrow. I declined but said I would try and drop by one morning later in the week. She said the college and written her to say that although she will not be resuming her post on the faculty until next September, her office will be reserved exclusively for her. This makes her very happy since she plans to spend a lot of time working there during the next six months since she finds she can accomplish written work with less distraction in an office than at home which I can readily understand. She said she took a ride on Sunday and although she must remain in bed most of the time, she is allowed to get up to break bread with her family.

Somehow I get the notion that she, like everybody else, is inclined to give no thought at all to plantation folks having a schedule. She knows quite well that I would gladly drop anything for any length of time to lend aid to a friend but that consideration is not based on the realization that unless the need is urgent, there are plenty of things claiming one's attention. I am quite sure, for example, that she would expect herself or her daughter, Ann, to drop everything and come to my assistance, should I require it but I don't believe she ever stops to realize that I am almost as busy as Ann and that I wouldn't think of calling upon either of them unless there should be something pressing and, since she is now entering upon her recuperation and has six months ahead of her for a measure of leisure, I think there is no great rush about me going to town to listen to her manuscripts. Gladly would I devote years to such a service and think nothing of it, were there any emergency but I must say I begrudge the loss of a whole day's labors, which a half day visit would require, were I to accept her invitation.

Somehow it all reminds me of two types of gardeners I have observed over the years. One time manages to collect big piles



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of trash and fine examples of foliage uproar and keep it intact as long as possible, apparantly to impress whoever passes with the evidences of much labor whereas the other type is forever smoothing away the trash and giving the impression that never does gardening require examples of uproar. ~~Practitioners~~ Practitioners of the latter method are either indifferent to what people think or pre-suppose that anyone with brains will understand that work progresses because of work and that there's no need of beating the drum about the vast amount of industry going on. But, even as one might suppose that there's no labor in maintaining a well operated household, so people, even as in Ora's case at the moment, seem to think that just because they aren't confronted by inordinate confusion at the end of a spade or atop of keyboard, work is pre-supposed.

I suppose the R. E. A. annual pow-wow must get under way within the next week or so, reminding me of one such annual gathering that somehow took the local folks through Lyme. I don't remember where it will be held this year but vaguely it seems to me in Florida or perhaps Atlanta or possibly New Orleans or Dallas. On February 28th and 29th the Pecane Growers Association will be meeting in Natchez and I assume some of the local folks will go. One of the pecane men from the Federal Experiment Station in the Shreveport area mentioned the other day that he was having to appear on the program but rather resented having to pay thirty dollars for the go-round which, among other things, covers not only hotel, banquet and tour but also the "gift" of some book by Harnett Kane to boot. He didn't know what book was being included. Perhaps "Natchez on the Mississippi". I suppose shall not go, not having been able to get a peep out of the Lost Word about the ability of her press to turn out a volume on pecanes for the 2 or 3 thousand dollars the Association is considering advancing to charge off to public relations.

I had to transmit a telephone message to a mulatto neighbor today and the lady, in thanking me, said she was glad of the opportunity to speak to me about her two sons. One is in his first year in college and getting along fine, the other is a senior in high school and says he wants to give up school and become a barber. She wanted my opinion as to whether she should "make" the latter go to college. I told her I thought the youth should finish his high school and then if he still wants to be a barber to let him be one. I opined that in the end the would-be barber will probably get just as far or farther than his brother. Doubting my sincerity at first, the lady

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Wednesday, February 17th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy all day and a little on the clammy side, with a drizzle beginning at first dark and the promise of 33 degree chilliness for the morrow.

I did not go to town and I did not hear from Ora although that may or may not be because she did not call. As a matter of fact, I was out of doors most of the day and so beyond the reach of a 'phone.

I was delighted to have four men appear on the gallery at dawning who wanted to work if there was anything to do. There were lots of things to do and, surprisingly enough I discovered by nightfall that they had achieved just that.

This is trimming time for crepe myrtles and scads of them were trimmed. Mitchell, the axe, who delights in doing nothing picked up branches, three feet in length, placing them in heaps all over the place so that by sundown, the gardens looked more than anything like the storage space of a manufacturer of brooms of the variety the street sweepers in Paris are wont to use.

I had two wheel barrows going at the same time and quite independently of the trimming business. These were devoted to transporting Giant's Beard from the side gate area where it has multiplied in excess, and re-locating it in the hana garden to further the outlining of the parterres, which, because of their size, seem to require tons of the stuff, and tons they are getting.

It is pleasant to report that the snow is disappearing very swiftly now and I doubt if there will be a trace left on the morrow, following tonight's rain.

I was coffee-ed across the fence this morning at 9. The lady seems quite happy. She says she hasn't decided about going to St. Louis to the R. E. A. convention as yet. The special train would depart on Sunday and J. H., at least, would be reuniting on Thursday, --by air, I suppose. But,



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although the lady hasn't decided about going, --"St. Louis is not my favorite city", -- I am told by the clerk that plans are being made for her sister to come up from Mansura to be with Madam Regard next week in case Madam Regard should be without kinfolks at the hospital.

It is pleasant to report that, at long last, I got an invitation to Learning tonight. The subject was Ibsen's Brandt, a play I have never seen and never read except in synopsis, and never though I would care much about seeing since rigid revivalists never excited my imagination much. Next week's discussion is supposed to be on Dickens' Tale of Two Cities, but whether it will be broadcast or not is problematical, as are all Learning programs. I suppose the book is the best known novel of the French Revolution, written, I suppose at least three quarters of a century after that convulsion began. We seem to have gone only about 40 some odd years since the Russian Revolution made its bow and so, perhaps, it is a little early for a major novel to appear having to do with that event. Some to think of it, we seem to have had quite a few more exciting biographical accounts, --autobiographical accounts of the Russian Revolution than the French Revolution but I don't know of any first rate novels about it that have come to light, --that is, with the Russian Revolution as its setting. Perhaps it is still too early. Perhaps, too, the Russian Revolution lacked a lot of the glamor and contrast and "good theatre" that lighted up so many things concerned with the French Revolution. The decapitations in the Place de la Concorde was in such an imposing setting as opposed to the shootings in a cellar away off at the other ends of the earth at Tobolsk or whatever was the name of the Russian doings. Settings in life and death do make a difference on the public imagination and it must be admitted the Russians came off by second best in the handling of their big scene.

I'm still thinking of the nice mail of Monday, and most especially of the lovely Valentine and all that its several messages brought to me from Lyme. I find myself thinking of Lyme in relation to the Founder's birthday week end, hoping that prolonged week end may provide a measure of repose and relaxation for little Miss Lee.....

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Thursday, February 18th, 1960.

Memorandum:

After an inch of rain last night, the skies cleared and today was sunny and cold and it will freeze again tonight.

It was such a delightful surprise to find such a grand letter from Lyme, as of Monday and Tuesday, in today's post.

I am indebted for the picture it presents of all that swirls in your neighborhood and I was especially happy to learn of the impending evening to be shared with the girl friend. May that association continue regardless of all the tempests set afoot by exterior forces.

As for the books you mentioned, I subscribe to every thing you had to say and am indebted to you for acquainting me with details about a number of titles, all of which sounded just grand to me and all worthy of including in the Congressional list. I don't recall having heard of "The King Must Die" and shall press for a copy forthwith. I should think the extended novel of the 13th century should be just the sort of thing that should be recorded. I suppose Eleanore of Guyenne may figure in such a tale, and, if so that should make it doubly interesting for that lady has always impressed me as being among the more remarkable of the inordinate number of remarkable ladies from the 11th through the 13th century.

And thanks for telling me about the Henry Adams volume. You, Miss Kate and I should all lose our minds over it, I should think. In his Education of Henry Adams, Mr. Adams, like Will Percy, cuts short any reference to the respective trips to Samoa with maddening brevity in some such fashion at the close of a chapter on something or other, by merely stating: so I took time out and went to Samoa. Perhaps in this volume, something will be said about the Henry Adams-Robert Louis Stevenson meeting on that island, -- a meeting of



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two of the extraordinary minds of the era, and what a pity that each seemed to nettle the other. As the book concludes, I believe you said, around 1900, it probably doesn't touch much on the trip along about 1894--nineteen hundred four, to Normandy with the Henry Cabot Lodges that eventually resulted in "Mont St. Michel et Chartres". I forget when the Cameron interlude took place but it seems to me that was in the 1890's. I believe Henry did have extended further. I believe Henry did quite a bit of casting about for particulars regarding the Burgund Eleanore of Guyenne, Anne of Castille and other ladies who probably figure prominently in the novel in several volumes you mention.

I kept my secretary late this evening, what with a harum-scarum of addressed to be fiddled with, --letters from people, sent to the Houston Chronicle and forwarded to me without a covering note, each communication carrying a check or a bill intended for the artist. Why these aren't sent directly, to the artist, I know not but since they aren't, I feel constrained to acknowledge them all whenever possible, although sometimes the sheet of paper to which they are attached, usually the bills, carry only some brief message, indicating they are for the artist but bearing no address of the senders. She doesn't know it but Miss Hunter would really need a secretary if she didn't already have one who is looking for such a job but simply for someone who can read. I figure, however, that a note of appreciation from her may eventually turn business in her direction and the Lord knows a letter is a cheap enough form of charity.

The clipping about the Ann Parrish millions is interesting. One would have thought Ann had more common sense but I think I understand the somewhat twisted concept that impelled her to dispose of her fortune as she did and someday I shall go into that.

Things are booming in the gardens in spite of the cold and I have enough work stacked up here in front of me to carry me through nights of labor for weeks on end and, although I fulminate about some of it, secretly, I relish it.....

10371

10371

Friday, February 19th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Clear and 40 like, following a hard frost last night. Only little patches of snow remain, mostly in the hedges.

One thing I did not get around to report last night was the destruction by fire of the Conrad Point Cottage near Baton Rouge. This is that imposing ante bellum home which was occupied for a season by Frances Parkinson Keyes. It was a pretty house and whilst imposing but not one of my favorites. Obviously of the 1850 vintage, big columns and such like, it has never been properly set forth historically. A dandy example is an occasional statement that Lafayette was a guest in the house. As I recall, the Marquis was in Louisiana in 1823-1824, long before the heroic pillars of the 1850's really got to going.

I called Thelma this morning to ask how things turned at Hodges Gardens yesterday. She said the films were really remarkably beautiful. John went with her and he was upset because when Northwestern State College was shown, the sound track referred to the place as the Normal School for Teachers, or some such, which was the name of the institution in the old days. She didn't know if that correction could be made in the sound track or not. She took a catty slap at Carolyn in this fashion:

The region is identified by making use of the great bronze doors of the State Capitol at Baton Rouge, depicting the important historical scenes of the State, with the camera brought to focus on the section depicting the first settlement under St. Denis at Natchitoches, "an exceedingly clever idea", sayeth Thelma, which probably she got from a camera man in her employ. That is typical of the constant attempts on the part of Thelma and Carmen to detract from Carolyn's artistic gifts which, silly enough, they seem to be might jealous about, just as though there weren't glory enough for all. Later I talked with James Hyde who also attended. He said the films were marvelous. He felt the one, "Garden in the Forest", would perhaps appeal more to



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people interested especially in flowers since it shows a great many close-ups which he said he thought Mr. Hodges had requested. As the name implies, it is about a garden and perhaps the close-ups will no bore flower fanciers. As for the other film, "Echo of Empire", or some such title, he says it is equally beautiful and will probably be much more popular. He says there are several shots of Melrose, all of which appear excellent. So much for that.

As for Carmen, being in the hospital, she did not attend. At coffee this morning, Celeste said Carmen wasn't doing so very well yesterday and was seeing but few visitors, --not surprising, --since she was under an oxygen tent

Today's post brought more checks and bills for the artist. One was interesting in that it was made out "To Sigman Byrd for Clementine Hunter", --something I had never seen before, Sigman Byrd being the reporter who did the article. The artist seemed pleased with all this new batch of money but it must have gone to her head in a way for when, later in the day, she brought me a picture she had promised to paint for a client, asking me to wrap and ship, she wanted a dollar more than she had contracted for. I pointed out to her that it was bad business to jump prices between quotation and delivery but she remained adamant and so without any further ado, I gave her the extra dollar and shall deduct it from incoming checks and bills that undoubtedly will be heading my way via the post on the morrow. Regardless of my stepped up secretarial duties in making acknowledgement of all these in-coming contributions, and no matter how strangely the artist reacts of this unexpected shower of gold, Pa is riding high, never having had such excellent wet groceries, thanks to the artist's infatuation. It is an interesting sidelight that Pa has been courting two ladies at the same time, the other being Madam Regard's nurse who is at present hesitant about marrying Benjamin (Joe Ben) Metoyer because she feels intuitively he lacks stability, according to Celeste

At long last, I learned today that my reading machine does not play the 16 r.p.m., but a new machine is now out that does and I'm going to ask for one slap. Gardening was my chief occupation today and so the world turns.....

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10373

Sunday, February 21st, 1960.

Memorandum:

A couple of inches of rain came last night, after a gloomy day but tonight the skies, although partly cloudy, have enough broken spaces to let through huge arabesques of star dusted blue sky.

It was so pleasant to find Wednesday letter in Saturday's post and to hold the thought that Wednesday night's outing may have held some delightful moments in the breaking of the bread.

I am so glad you recalled to memory the book Ray Thompson did with text and photographs. How it appeared had slipped my mind until you described it but now I remember perfectly. It was so kind of you to offer to let me see your copy but I believe I have one either here or at the big house and now that its appearance has been brought back to mind, I shall be able to lay hands on it readily enough.

It was a happy co-incidence that you mentioned the Lincoln matter in your letter, as between Broadway and Amsterdam between 42nd and 65th Streets. I had just run across a reference to the place in Friday night reading but as no reference was made as to just where it was located, I found myself wondering until your letter came to enlighten me.

I have enjoyed the clippings so much, both as to the Lincoln matter and the deaths of the two writers. I had not heard of the passing of these two people and, as I am acquainted with their writings, I was especially glad to be brought up to date.

Saturday's post also brought this week's issue of Life which seems to contain much material I want to explore and there was a record from the Library of Congress, one side of which gives instructions on how to use Talking Books and that was read by A. Scourby, esquire. The other side is given over to the commemoration of 25 years of the Talking Book. E. Roscoe Morrow manages that side of the record and a number of familiar voices are also incorporated into the disc, including Katharine Cornell, Alexander Woollcott and others. It is quite a fine piece of business and I have enjoyed it once and shall re-read it before I knock off a letter of



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appreciation.

Juanita A. drove over from Conroe, arriving here at noon, just as we were about to sit down to dinner. Joe had come in from Arkansas Friday night. That was all I saw of Juanita who left immediately after dinner to go to town with Celeste and she headed out for Texas before dinner today. I wished I had had an opportunity to chat with her, she is such a nice person. I believe returns to Arkansas on the morrow.

The reason Juanita A. returned home today was because she teaches and, even as Louisiana, so all Texas schools seem to pay no attention to Washington's birthday, so far as taking the day off. I could see how this might be so in the case of Lincoln but it strikes me as exceedingly odd in the case of Washington. I am sure both States must have heard of George Washington but perhaps neither of them realize as yet that each is an integral part of the United States.

Celeste and J. H. took off for St. Louis right after dinner. Celeste was so gay, contemplating the impending frolic and anticipating returning in time this week end to go to Hatches next week end for the Pecan Growers Convention. Life is so exciting and delightful if one can but be constantly on the jump.

Little King drove home from camp, --South Carolina, I believe, on Friday night. He had a drink or two on Saturday morning and it almost knocked him out. Jefferson Brown, son of Murphy, Fugabou's boy and Fugabou's daughter, asked if they might drive the car to town. Little King got in the back seat to "rest his eyes". Fugabou's boy was driving and hit a white couple's car, fracturing the brain of their baby. Fugabou's boy kept right on going. The law picked them up an hour or two later. It would seem the Melrose contingent at Angola may well be looking for old friends almost any time soon. Surely, as noted above, there's nothing like the big road.

Ora had asked if I could arrange to receive her and the lady doctor this afternoon and I had expressed enchantment but Ora called later to say the lady doctor had been on a merry go round through a night of exhausting rounds, including visits to Carmen who isn't doing much better, all of which afforded me much quiet which I secretly loved.....

87801

10375

Monday, February 22nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cool in the 40's scant humidity, except under foot, and cloudless skies.

My 'phone rang a little after six this morning. It must be the Rocket, I told myself but I was wrong. In reality, the closest I got to it was a lady who looks like the Rocket, -- Ora. Manifestations of excess energy always seem to me like little clouds along the horizon, --indicating nothing in particular but suggesting that excess energy is often indicative of something or other that is unlike usual patterns of behavior.

Ora explained that she thought she and R. B. would be able to secure a diary kept by a lady in the Bermuda area, the book having been inherited by the writer's granddaughter or some such. All Ora wanted to know was whether I would help her in doing something with the diary. I would. I think it is no necessary to call anyone at six in the morning for such a thing although I was in no way inconvenienced, being at my desk at the time and catching the 'phone on the first buzz. Still, I think the hour of making the call is indicative of unusual forces a-stir.

There was an early call on Sunday, too, and I was impressed at the time by the unusual depths of analysis of various kin folk who usually get passed over, either thought courtesy or indifference, with scarcely a word or phrase.

The Sunday call was to get an address of the Rocket that might get a letter through to her, --a question difficult to answer but I gave the Advertising Mart, hoping that might do. Late there was another call to read the note addressed to the Rocket, asking her to jot down on an attached card in a stamped self addressed envelope, giving the name of the literary agent in New York who had been sent the manuscript of a short story 2 or 3 years ago. The Rocket had sent Ora's manuscript to the agent for her and later Carolyn had handed Ora a section of the letter from the agent, stating that the Reporter magazine was interested. I know of these, of course, but I did not know, as Ora then related, that there was a notation at the bottom of the letter reading something like: "Don't bother about this manuscript. I think



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I have one that is perhaps better. C." It all reminded me of letters Miss Cammie used to begin to somebody, relating enthusiasms, which would get tucked into a flower catalogue, to be discovered six months later, the letter concluded without the writer ever reading what she had jotted down at the first go-round, with the result that the second part sometimes seemed in pure juxtaposition in fact and in enthusiasm to the paragraph just above.

Ann called me this noon for a little chat. She said she thought her mama was making fine progress, seemed bubbling over with energy and was apparently as happy as a clam. Ann said that Pat and Juanita had given such a delightful party for about 60 on Saturday night. She says further that Pat was in bed today with flu, --and working cross word puzzles. She said on account in the offices of Hodges Enterprises had confided to Jack that Hodges had sold certain oil wells to meet a two million dollar bill and Jack was wondering if money was short.

Joe is still here, leaving for Arkansas tomorrow. He and Dan sat next to each other at supper tonight and Joe, patting himself on the back, spoke of how busy he had been doing plumbing all afternoon, "otherwise the house might fall down if neglected", to which Dan replied that he, himself, had long hoped it would. As soon as supper was over, Joe couldn't wait to scurry to Yucca to expound his feelings.

I talked with Mrs. Walker this afternoon, suggesting she do a bi editorial on how George Washington's birthday doesn't get observed in Louisiana and Texas where schools function as though there were no G. Washington holiday. My point was to pin the matter of the D. A. R. cells, so active in reactionary causes so inactive about observing the birthday of the most vital figure in the Revolution. I think she liked the idea. I guess I should have used the subject for a Cane River Memo as I am bound to knock off some dab of something before calling it a day but perhaps I shall come up with something although just what, I haven't any notion at the moment. The day has been a busy one at gardening and I'm already lasepy but perhaps a cold coke will give me a new lease on life.....

10377

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Tuesday, February 23rd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Today, weatherwise, a transcript of yesterday, clear and air-ish.

Celeste's sister, Celine Roy, came out this morning at coffee time and relaxed until mid afternoon when she returned to town. She is a younger edition of her mama and sweet-sweet, remarking that she had taken her mother's personality while Celeste had taken her papa's.

We walked in the gardens a little and she said she had met so many people during the past two days at the hospital who sent messages by her to me. She said, among other things, that the lady doctor had asked her to tell me that she and some lady, -- it probably was Ora, would be coming out to see me on Wednesday afternoon. She said she had met a Miss Willard, --Madam Regard telling Celine that I. S. Willard had never married, and that Miss Willard had told her to pass along word to me that she had hurried back to town when her brother had fallen ill. I didn't know I. S. Willard had a brother but she might have had a dozen. Madam Regard has forgotten about I. S. Willard having a couple of grandchildren.

interruption.....

I. S. Willard, of all people, just called. She said she had so much enjoyed talking with James on the 'phone last Saturday before getting the call to get back here in a hurry. She said he was so gay. She said Kay was in Morgan City. Does it strike you we hear little from or about that lady of late. I dropped her a line a couple of times while she was at the Bluff which she may or may not have received and once since her return.

Did I mention Blythe and Joan Frantz passed this way today, saying that la Briarwood is in a tizzy because she has ordered a second edition of her book before half the 1st edition has been sold and has mortgaged Briarwood to pay the bill. I find it difficult to believe this. It came from a lady who frequently gives Carrie a great big hand-out and I'm just wondering. Well, a mountain of work awaits me and the clock points to 11 and I must get busy again a big morning on the morrow to give me a day's work at



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Blythe got her Briarwood news from a lady whose name eludes me who is forever gadding about the world and every once in a while dropping in on Carrie to give her a financial lift. E. Randolph Keupler was with this lady and even knows what Carrie really told them and how they relayed it. But the point, as Blythe understood it was that Carrie had taken the money la Storm had sent to pay all hospital and doctor bills and put that money on a second edition and then, needing the money for the doctor and hospital bills, had mortgaged Briarwood to pay off those charges. The ladies may have been mixed up or it may be that Carrie thought the story adequate for further assistance from her wealthy Alexandria friend. I don't see that it matters so far as Carrie's business with her financial better goes but it does seem a pity that she should have jockeyed things around, --if she really has,-- so that Briarwood is again in hock in what boils down to be a 2nd edition of a book which has stalled in its sales before half of the first edition is sold. I had supposed the 1st edition was already sold out almost in advance of publication but apparently not.

Last night I tried to read a little from In Chancery,-- the second volume of the Forsythe Saga but I got to resting my eyes almost before I got started. I like Glasworthy so much and only regret, even as does little Miss Lee, that there isn't more time in each day for getting caught up on books one would like to explore before drowsiness sets in. Today's letters was one from Ray Thompson and another from Martin Hirsch. With Blythe arriving at the wrong time, I didn't get far in Martin's but I gather he must want some pictures or Gobelins or some such, since a letter from that quarter usually indicates business as the excuse for writing, no matter how cordially they may be couched.

10379

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Wednesday, February 24th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Rain, beginning at 8 this morning and continuing right along during the past 13 hours, not to mention a chilly wind which will blow us no ice, I hope.

I was so glad to get some transplanting done between dawn and the rain so that the things, finding themselves in a new situation, will scarcely sense they have been moved, thanks to the dampness and unaltered temperatures.

For the balance of the morning, I had fun changing things about in my boudoir. What I liked best in the alterations was the taking down of the primitive panel at the end of my desk, --the one that appears to the left of the picture window in the Picayune front page illustration. For years I have treasured an early Hunter that is quite vanGogh in appearance, --yellow and black in large measure, the yellow being daffodils.

I had forgotten how long the panel had occupied this place and didn't realize, until it had been removed, that the walls had been painted at least once since the panel had been installed. Under ordinary circumstances, this might have presented quite a problem that would have required the panel being put back or the room re-painted. But, happily, I recalled several pieces of Lowells, --the same material as the draperies and putting my hand into the depths of a grab bag, I drew out a length and there it is incredible, -- the thing being exactly the width of the panel and of a length that stretched from molding to well below my desk top and withal, hemmed. And so I simply attached it to the inner side of the molding, tacked the molding itself back into its accustomed place, and, lo! the wall was completely covered with the same type of fabric that ran along on each side of the space where the draperies frame the window, laughing the while in my beard as I hung the Hunter-van Gogh and wondering how in the world such a perfect length and width of material, could



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ever have been made for some other purpose that fitted so neatly into this new one, --and more miraculous, that I should have ever encountered it at the precise moment I needed it.

Ora called me about 10 while I was engaged in my re-decoration, bubbling over with enthusiasm about some scheme that she thought up, something about getting a sabbatical year so that the college will pay her while she devotes her time to work on the manuscript she mentioned yesterday, etc., etc., etc. It was easy to see that Ora had been bubbling along instead of resting and I was delighted when she said that she planned collapsing during the afternoon and catching up on sleep which, of course, meant that she and the lady doctor would not be honoring me this afternoon. I should have been glad to see them both but with the gardens all a-wash, I felt the trail they would have had to negotiate getting here would have been a little arduous.

Mrs. Walker called at 7 this evening to say both the Enterprise and the Times were holding their presses, not for a story but for photographic plates, all of which for the respective periodicals, were somewhere between Shreveport where they are made into plates, and Hatchitoches. Delivery was expected hourly so the presses could start turning. She also read me a short letter from the Lone Star State, stating that, in the opinion of the writer of the letter, the Cane River Memo was written by a great man, --Lord, have mercy, --and the column was worth the price of the subscription if the paper contained nothing else. I suppose this is to balance off the communications for the Mat Hertzog variety. The letter was signed by Mrs. John Lagrange Spinks of Crockett, Texas. Surely there is nothing like remaining behind a bamboo for one to get the outside world confused.

Quite unexpectedly, on this Wednesday night instead of Monday, Invitation to Learning came through, --a Tale of Two Cities. Surprisingly enough the Harvard professor on the program stated that this Dickens novel is taught as the ideal model for contemporary detective story writing. All three gentlemen agreed that it was forces and events rather than characters that mattered in the story, all of the characters being merely two dimensional although they all seemed to agree that in spite of the unimportance of the characters, one of these, --Madame Defarge, never failed to scare them to death as and whenever they re-read the story. I had forgotten all about Madame Defarge until they mentioned her but on remembering, I must confess I felt a shiver run up and down my spine.....

10381

10381

Thursday, February 25th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Strange sort of weather, what with the sun shining all day and the thermometer never staggering above the 30's, thanks to a brisk North wind, slap off the ice cakes. Tonight it is clear, too, the breeze still blowing from the same direction and the stars as glittering as only a frost can make them.

It was such a pleasant surprise to discover an air mail from Lyme in today's post. I am so especially happy to know that the two ladies had such a grand time in breaking bread and attend the theatre. I hold the thought that by some miracle, the recent invasion of the bull in the china shop did not upset and irreproachably crack the finest piece in the shop.

It was so kind of little Miss Lee to pass along the Dallas address and to give me the benefit of the time element involved in the two communications from that quarter. The dates of the 11th and 13th instants would certainly seem to indicate, even as your appraisal of the two hand writings, that these communications issued from different individuals.

My day was a busy one, cluttered up with little odds and ends such as getting people to doctors, writing letters from dictation for three sons of the soil, unable to write themselves and consumed with misgivings about having others than one they trust in lending a hand with confidential communications.

I dropped by next door with a view of wishing the lady a slap happy natal day but learned from the servant that she had departed for town 10 or 15 minutes before coffee is usually served. I left a little gift as a reminder of her birthday and can already here the conversation opened by her when next we meet: --"I'm mad at you.....you shouldn't have given me anything.....I'm really mad at you..... a line that is as old as the acquaintance.

It was nice to know you had heard from that quarter and receive news covering local personalities. It is my understanding she and husband will depart early-early on Sunday morning for



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Hatchez and that they will return by Tuesday.

I had a 'phone call from Ora this noon, reporting she had purchased a diary from a lady in town, having entries for the years 1862 - 1859. She said she had paid five hundred dollars for it which struck me as probably being about four hundred fifty dollars more than the lady could have secured for it from any other source. It is the one that she wishes me to give her advice about in making a book about it. I think the five hundred is perhaps something that can be charged off against recuperation and may provide a pivot around which energy may be expended in the months ahead. The fact that Ora looks like the Rocket suggests, perhaps, that both may be possessed of the same remarkable energy and perhaps it is vital to them both that they keep themselves in a perpetual whiz. Even as man is bound to accept the orbit of constellations that flash through the sky and then vanish for years before putting in another appearance, so must one accept the driving force behind personalities such as these. Were one to ponder on the matter, one probably come around to the conviction that, like a spinning top, such people must of necessity keep ever spinning to avoid falling into the discard, what with their inability to carry on if not thus whirling at a rate far beyond the usual tempo.

Of the enclosures, I guess none are of any particular interest. The Schimids are such sweet people but so lacking in the gift that made Madame de Sevigne famous. The letter from Martin suggests that Cane River primitives are still to the fore. I must get off a letter to Martin, suggesting that deep summer might be a good time for the Nieman-Marcus visitation.

I shall try to get off a letter to Ruolph tonight, too, but that is more difficult to write. I am bound to acknowledge news of the death of his father but I shall have to think up some way of side-stepping his request for an invitation to come here to spend a week end. Not the least reluctance on my part regarding a visit is the fact that I still feel he should have assumed responsibility for the actions of his guest on the occasion when stuff vanished and there is an a little blot I cannot seem to erase. --the question in my mind if one folio, certainly of no interest at all to his friend, did no perhaps take flight to Denton rather than where ever his friend dwelt. I hope I am wrong in courting such a possibility but since I haven't eradicated it, I should be

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10383

Friday, February 26th, 1960.

Memorandum:

My radio this morning said it was 39 and raining at Lyme. It was 22 at Yucca, the sky a remarkable Delft blue. And the sun kept right on shining all day without bothering to exert much influence on the thermometer and it is freezing again tonight and so goes the strange patter of this winter's weather.

Last night, before responding to my impulse to flatten out, I forced myself to knock off a dull enough column for next week under some such title as Lost Plantations. It was fairly late when I had finished but I wanted to finish the last few chapters of Galsworthy's *InChacery* which I did, and then, being fully awake, I simply had to sample a little of Moss Hart's *Act One* which read itself so smoothly that it was really much later than I had supposed when I finally made up my mind to go to bed.

It's curious how the habit of getting up at a certain hour seems to operate even when one ought to be getting an extra minute of shut-eye and so it was this morning and so it was that when my 'phone rang a little after six, I was at my desk. It was Ora again, with much enthusiastic talk about her new diary. She 'phoned again just as I started getting the noon news, bubbling over with enthusiasm that she had somehow secured a whole suitcase full of her sister-in-law's most prized documents, including the remarkable Prudhomme family tree which Madam Beaufort turned over to her to be placed in the college library vault during the visit of the C. Vernon Cloutiers to Rochester, Minnesota. During the time of la Beaufort's absence, Ora may have photostated anything she wants and, if I interpret the feelings of Ora, the whole business will be microfilmed. She said R. B. was complaining that his wife's energy is wearing him out. I doubt if Ora knows that ladies having the type of operation she has just experienced usually manifest such bursts of energy that never seems to get back under control. I trust she is cutting out enough work for herself so that she will be able to concentrate on her research and thus return to the family hearth at the end of each day with a measure of reduced momentum.



10384

88801

At 9:30 this morning, Dr. Novak of New Orleans, who had spoken in town last night on matters concerning the heart, came to see me by appointment, --not about the heart but for a look at Melrose about which she had heard much from Dr. Worsley and Dr. Talley. She confessed to me that she had accepted the invitation to journey only on condition that she should be able to visit Melrose and that both ladies, --Worsley and Talley, -- and assured her she could. I found Dr. Novak reminding me so very much of Gertrude Stein in facial appearance, height, build and all. Unlike Gertrude, she doesn't appear especially interested in Art but she is interested in enough other things so that the absence of one segment of interest didn't seem to matter.

This afternoon a Dr. Beatty of Stanford, California, came to see me on somebody's recommendation. He is a geologist who had run over to the Mississippi Valley from the West Coast to observe doings of the Atomic Energy doings in the Winfield salt mines. Like other geologists I have met, he struck me as interested in lots of things outside of Geography and it was a pleasure to hear him talk about books and especially about Henry Adams, Robert Louis Stevenson and such like...

I didn't get an opportunity to attend to my mail and a secretary who was supposed to come after supper never did show up. It is pleasant to note, however, that among the letters is one from the Dallas lady whose address you so kindly passed along. Obviously you were right in your interpretation of the second letter and how it had nothing to do with the other.

And while I think of it, I want to thank you for having told me about the article on the Wall Street property in Natchez which, of course, I had not heard about until you passed it along. Do not send it to me but if you will retain it, I shall be glad for sometime I should like to refer to it when turning my attention to Spanish matters in the Bluff City.

I listen with amusement to all the carryings-on in the Senate these days over the Civil Rights debate. I was especially pleased to hear one Senator quoted as declaring that although he recognizes the Senatorial group in which he figured, --I believe it was Russel of Georgia, -- still even a minority had its rights and he proposed fighting for them. It seemed to me one might take the words right out of the Senator's mouth and apply them to a larger minority in the South he is opposing.

We are promised cold and rain for the week end which doesn't seem to dampen the keenness of my neighbor to get started for the Bluff City early Sunday. Well, power to her.....

88801

10385

Sunday, February 28th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Saturday clear and cold, Sunday cloudy, drizzly and warm.

The postman must be feeling the urge of Spring or at least he came out of hibernation so early on Saturday morning, he had made his rounds two hours ahead of schedule, --hence no out-going mail.

A little after six on Saturday Ora called about more things she had rounded up for her forthcoming diary-book. She said the lady doctor wanted to bring her down here on Sunday afternoon.

Saturday afternoon brought me some pecane people, -- College Station, Texas, folks and very nice, en route for Natchez.

After I had worn them out with a tour, J. H. took them for a whiz around the pecane orchards. Supper had been over a half hour before he had sent them on their way. I sat with him while he ate. He said he had been wanting to see me to ask if he should take down the old barn beyond the bindery and weaving house. Naturally, I said it should be put back in order and given a new roof. Actually, he is bound to have known my notions on the matter, as he had asked me about it last spring. What he simply wanted was somebody's assurance that what he had already made his mind to do was right. I suppose he and Celeste left this morning for Natchez.

Ora called me at 6 this morning to say she had rounded up a lot more stuff and to report that the lady doctor has a difficult case that is keeping her close to the patient and so they would not get down today.

I. S. Willard called at 10:30, reporting she was going South and wanted to stop off to take a snapshot of the Ghana garden. She said she would be here in half an hour. She arrived promptly at one o'clock and remained until 2 but didn't take any pictures as she had left her camera at home.



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I hoped to get a bit of reading done this afternoon for I am enjoying the picture of the theatre that Moss Hart's "Act One" presents but I didn't get very far.

Secretaries who couldn't read interrupted quite frequently and then, quite unannounced, the Chockleys arrived with a couple of people. It was good seeing them but Harry is rather like J. H. in that he cannot "stay put" very long at a time. They said they had just driven up to say "Howdy", which probably isn't much of a drive for them but Lake Charles must be a couple of hundred miles and I suppose it is as far one way, coming, as it is the other way, going. Were I to invest 400 miles in a drive, I think I could relax momentarily in the midst of it but Harry couldn't for very long.

While they were here, the artist called to say some old friends of mine wanted to see me and could they come over. I responded negatively, -- not until my other company had departed. The old friends waited at the front gate, -- a couple of attractive young women from somewhere in South Louisiana whom I vaguely remembered having met two or three years ago. I don't even recall their names and didn't even ask to have my memory refreshed.

Today's radio reports that the President is showing signs of fatigue on his South American tour. It is further said that this week end, by way of relaxation, he is withdrawing to some mountain resort for conferences with the Argentine President and a few rounds of golf. J. H., his voice still proclaiming evidences of the flu, plans to confer with the Pecan Growers in Hatcher tomorrow, getting up at 4 o'clock on Tuesday morning, to get back here between 7 and 8 on Tuesday. It reminds me so much of the all night jaunt through the snow on Lincoln's birthday when J. H. pushed on from New Orleans to almost home instead of getting a good night's sleep in the Crescent City and returning here by plane the following day. Why a person, showing signs of fatigue, simply could relax and leave the golf links to themselves and more rested play I cannot imagine. This mania to be on the jump constantly strikes me as being utterly senseless and I marvel that human beings can keep up this merry-go-round existence so endlessly and to such little

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Monday, February 29th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy with a blustery North wind blowing off the ice cakes and the promise for Tuesday and Wednesday is the same thing except for rain or sleet begin tossed in for good measure.

Ora didn't call until 7 this morning. She had much to tell about a trip she made to the library yesterday and her inability to use the college classified room although the keys were available and she herself had but recently contributed a treasure of manuscripts to that section of the college library classified room. Somebody was sticking to the letter of the law and losing a gift of great price by taking such a stand. She had asked a cartographer to meet her there to reproduce a faded map and so she had to wait for the cartographer's arrival to tell him the work could not be done. As the man is a close personal friend of the President of the college, it all seemed mighty absurd and will perhaps dampen Ora's enthusiasms and a little dampening wouldn't do any harm, since she has more than ten times the amount she should have at the moment.

She had her son call me this afternoon to ask if I would receive Father somebody from the Watchitoches Cathedral on the morrow. I would. Everyone seems to think the man quite a whiz and I know I shall enjoy seeing him although I have more work stacked up than I shall ever be able to surmount. Perhaps I may press the good Father into a dab of secretarial work which would be nice for me. The Reverend father, it is said, is an avid reader of the Cane River Memo and because of his interest in it, he wanted to chat with the author. If he really wanted to be real nice, he might bring me one of his own compositions for I seem to be running mighty thin on copy during these busy days of pre-planting operations.

I was delighted to have two strong arms appear on my doorstep this morning and I made the most of their availability to get to work on the gourd trellises, removing some old bamboo and substituting new ones, extending the trellises themselves and generally carrying on in preparation for the advent of old Primavera.



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Celeste's servant called me this afternoon, asking me if it would be alright if she headed out tonight with her brother to attend tomorrow's Mardi Gras in New Orleans. How wonderful it must be so young and gay as to think nothing at all about driving through the night to get to the rescent City to spend the day in frolic and then return through the night to get back on the job.

The news from James that Kay had suffered a fall and broken her hip or some such was sad news although I am a little curious that the accident was avoided until now. I suppose James believes the best way to keep a secret is not to confide in anyone although I should have assumed that by now he ought to know well enough to feel assured I should no pass the tidings along to either the East or the West Coast.

With a measure of luck in the other things awaiting my attention, I shall probably do a little reading before folding up my beard and, if so, I shall undoubtedly finish Moss Hart's "Act One". I still think it an excellent book but I do find it could be improved in places by shortening it up a little and I think of this every time I read and re-read his observations about the necessity of constantly pruning words from the script of a play and feel the more the same thing should have been applied to his manuscript of the autobiography.

If one may assume that Mr. Hart wrote his autobiography, displaying, as it does, such a wide acquaintance with all sorts of things, the occasional although rare use of a French phrase, etc., one cannot but regret he didn't include something about his own education which doesn't seem to have included graduation from High School, leaving one to infer that he must have broadened his education considerably outside the school which fact ought to heighten interest in his career. It must be conceded, however, that the Autobiograph is more of a story about how an ambitious youth with loads of talent makes the grade into the show business and perhaps is more of a hand book for theatrical people than for laymen.

And now I must break off and do some work and then see what

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Fat Tuesday, March 1st, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cold, sleet, rain and that just about sums up the pelican State's weather situation for this go round. Anybody who wants to frolic in the big road ought to have it pretty much to themselves. I had thought it the height of folly when I heard that Representative Hebert had engineered the way into sending a couple of submarines to New Orleans so that Mardi Gras participants might take the opportunity of a holiday to go over to the Mississippi and inspect the submarines, but I changed my mind as the day progressed and concluded that had I been in the Crescent City, I should have perhaps preferred contemplating the world from inside a submarine to consider things as they must have appeared on the streets of New Orleans under the unpleasant atmospheric conditions obtaining throughout this entire area, with the radio promising more of the same sort of stuff for the next couple of days at least.

I coffee-ed across the fence this morning and was delighted to learn that everything in Natchez was perfectly darling throughout Sunday and Monday. J. H. made one tour, Celeste made three but as Levereux wasn't open on either of those days, they did not get to see Miss Myra. They did get to meet Mrs. Moore who was receiving at the Briars, and they met Myrtie and Charles at the hotel, and Celeste participated in a tour that included Mistletoe where she had an opportunity to chat with Mary Lambdin and all the ladies were darling.

At Hope Farm, Celeste introduced herself to Catherine Halfour Miller as a friend of mine and Katherine immediately wanted to chat with me, poor lady, who, since 1938 seems to have been wanting to do honors for one elusive pilgrim with whom she has never yet caught up.

I am sure the tours must have been a success for Celeste seems impatient for October to arrive so she can get the local pilgrimage under way.



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In spite of the sleet, Father Donald Damiens came down from town to chat with me for a couple of hours. He seems like a good egg and I think he will be coming back but I hope he will wait until some of the mud puddles have evaporated so he can get round a little and see some of the things I think he would enjoy.

On Sunday, a week ago, they buried Brosie Peace at St. Mathews and next Sunday they will bury Borsie Peace, jr., who died in Alexandria last night. This means, I suppose, that Levy Peace, currently at Angola, who was up a week ago for his papa's funeral will be permitted to come up again this Sunday for his brother's. "Little Brosie, as everyone called him here, although he was bigger than his papa, even as Robert and Little Robert, had three or four children and was only about 20, if I remember correctly. I believe he was the most conservative of his family and never got mixed up in playful games like his brother, McKinley who had a butcher knife run through his heart a few years back, or like Levy who shot off his wife's head but merely a quiet, healthy citizen who astonished everybody by simply dropping dead. Everyone seems to feel somehow that Little Brosie somehow cheated everybody by passing out in such a prosaic fashion.

J. H., although still hoarse, was gay enough at supper. He was a little late in arriving, having been in Court to settle the case about the pecan tree that was roughed up by some car last summer. He had settled out of Court for \$340.00 to avoid having the case drawn out endlessly in a suit that would have entailed examining all the plantation account books on matters pertaining to and not pertaining to the cultivation, care and productivity of pecan trees. He referred only once during supper to anything else but did pause long enough to say:

"I sure was out among your folks over in Hatcher and they were all asking about you and wondering why you weren't there."

That "your folks" is so typical of J. H., and anyone present unacquainted with the set-up would have assumed, of course, he was talking about my relatives.

I've got to do some desk work tonight and that will be pleasant enough, what with all the sleet outside and the coziness inside..

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Wednesday, March 2nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cold and rainy with a freeze for tonight and more clouds and rain promised for the morrow.

I seem to have been on the jump from morning 'til night but I can't seem to think of anything worth while undertaken or achieved although there were plenty of little old odds and ends to be taken care of and perhaps they account for something but I can't think of what except the taking up of time.

I knocked off a column under the title of "God and Hatcher" last night which wasn't worth the paper it was written on, having thought I would try to improve on an earlier attempt. I listened for a while to someible slappers and fell asleep without getting any news. I awoke about twenty minutes of one, however, when Andy knocked at my door. He seemed quite upset because his brother wasn't feeling well and had come to phone his uncle in town to talk with him about the case. It seemed like a fairly late hour for such discussions but time is only a relative thing between sun-up and sun-down and whatever transpires between dawn sun-down and sun-up doesn't really matter.

I think Andy had had a shot or two and that may have accounted for some of his disregard of the hour. I fell asleep while he talked but he awakened me half an hour later and I gave him some asperin and some epsom salts for applying to a swelling from which his brother was suffering and off Andy went in the rain. He said his uncle would be down to pick up Albert this morning but by 3 this afternoon, the uncle hadn't up in an appearance as yet. Andy had asked me to arrange for a car to take Albert to town last Thursday to see the doctor and after some effort, the car was secured with driver and took Andy home to pick up



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Albert who had changed his mind and decided he wasn't going to the doctor and so on and so forth and thus people die on the plantation but, miraculous to relate, some of them live.

Ora called this afternoon to report she had secured the services of a secretary and that work was beginning on her material. At the same time, however, she announced that she and R. B. were leaving tonight for New Orleans to attend some lawyer's thing and that seemed daring enough for an ex-operation patient. I need not try to understand such a flyings up and down the road for I never shall and as everyone says Ora looks just fine, I can see no point in anyone worrying but I do not cease to marvel, however.

I put a batch of letters in a separate envelope this evening and addressed same to little Miss Lee. I think there is nothing of any particular interest although the account of Kay's accident gives a clearer account than I had recalled from the initial reading.

I have been thinking quite abit about two places in the Hart autobiography, "Act One". I found them both arresting. One is about in the middle of the book about returning to the condition he found it the shack he occupied during one summer in Vermont where he was entertainment director. The other place is toward the end where he wrecks, atmospherically, at least, the apartment where he and his parents have been living. Both episodes strike me as such jarring notes, such unimaginative things in a book filled with imagination that I return to them in thought over and over again, wishing the while that if these two things are true, the author had left them out, they seem so malevolent and so uncharitable toward unknown people who would be occupying the places next. Moss Hart is undoubtedly an artist and in writing his excellent book he has had to decide what to put in and what to leave out, as much every artist in every creation. Perhaps there was a ghost assisting Mr. Hart in some of his biography and, if so, it is unfortunate the ghost didn't persuade him to eliminate the two episodes. As for myself, I hope I may pen a better memo on the morrow.....

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Thursday, March 3rd, 1960.

Memorandum: a quick and dirty note to myself

Clear and cold, the thermometer not getting much above freezing all day with the prediction it will sag to 14 tonight. 1788 is said to have been among the colder winters in Europe but 1840 was a record breaker in Louisiana until 1960 came along to out-do what had gone before.

The Weather bureau was so busy talking about conditions in this area, it omitted reference to Lyme so I know not how they are shapping up in the neighborhood although the fact that a snow storm is spreading from the eastern Rockies to Pennsylvania inclines me to believe that Lyme may be getting a covering, too, but I hope not. The 'phone and electric wires are in a mare's nest just above Shreveport, it is said, some places having miles of poles flat on the ground which certainly must make life inconvenient in such areas. It is said that four-fifths of Marshall is without electricity but probably the Rocket is in New Orleans or New York or some such place and thus wouldn't be inconvenienced anyway.

I got sort of a jolt early this morning when a telephone from town reported that The Enterprise on the same page as the Cane River Memo carried a letter to the Editor which referred to the column. This must have been the one mentioned on the 'phone the other day but nothing was said about it being reproduced. I investigated later and discovered that because of the position of the Letters to the Editor department and because the letter refers to other matters as well, few readers will probably ever see it which will save me from duck in this season when the politicians will be so busy with their candidates and that tired old phrase, "great man who

I thought Mrs. Walker's column, Around Hatchitoches, having to do with Shreveport's startling problem was amusing but that was all I did get to read and how the Lost Plantations turned out, I don't know, as I, of course, never did get around to read it, either



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before or after the thing went into print.

Tonight's radio announced from Baton Rouge that the Grand Jury had not agreed to return an indictment against Dr. Mickey and that he may therefore be released from jail on a ten thousand dollar bond. What the next step will be in the extraordinary business is the probability that more evidence will be sought. Like everyone else, I cannot imagine Dr. Mickey as the killer even though I haven't a shred of explanation for my stand other than that he seems like a good guy. Curiously enough, however, in the case of the Dutchman in Boston, acquitted for the murder of the gal on the high seas, I found myself a little surprised at the outcome of the trial although I should have been shocked had the jury given the man a death sentence on circumstantial evidence. The radio did little about the Boston trial and so I have no notion as to how public sentiment ran but it is to be hoped in both cases that something will eventuate that will tend to discourage people from tapping ladies on the head and pushing other ladies out of port holes on sea going vessels.

I was amused this bright chilly morning at a statement made on the gallery to me by a shivering youth who had tapped while I was on the phone. I asked the person on the wire to hold on until I could answer the door. The youth wondered if he could "borrow" a few nickles, explaining he wanted to get his papa back from the Shreveport Charity Hospital where he had gone on Saturday. I said I thought his papa had returned on Sunday. The youth opined I must have been mistaken. I said I had talked with his papa at the store yesterday. Not at all taken aback, the youth explained that it was true his papa had come back in the flesh alright but what the boy wanted to do now was to get his papa's spirit, left in Shreveport, back, what with the weather being so cold and all. I must say, to quote an old plantation mistress, "Those kids sure take the rag off the bush....."

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Friday, March 4th, 1960.

Memorandum:

And so the radio says 15 inches of the white stuff settled on Lyme, no to mention greater deposits in the suburbs and I found myself wishing I could share some of the blue sky that was mine at dawning although the local temperature wasn't much better than yours. --21 in Lyme, I believe, Yucca was 23 and Anchorage Alaska was 17 or thereabouts, none of which seems to make the slightest bit of sense.

I am trying to tell myself that by some kind twist of fate, business came to a standstill and that in consequence thereof, little Miss Lee found herself possessed quite unexpectedly of a day of domestic employment rather than the usual run of the mill doings. Busy as were the snow shovels across the central section of the country, so equally active were power saws, axes and weed knives along the fringes of the local gardens. J. H. came up with an idea around mid morning that it would be nice to cut down all the bamboo hedges, some chinquapin trees, the big old palm, long since lifeless, hard by the front gate and so on.

He is always restrained from such operations until he has consulted with Lestan and so consultations were frequent and slashing copious. Before night, about half the hedge from the front to the middle of the iris garden was down and carted away and tomorrow crews of men will begin where they left off. I should have preferred leaving the few good stalks of bamboo but they are so few and the tangle of fallen ones so great that it is perhaps just as well to eradicate the whole business so the new bamboo shoots a month or so hence may start from scratch. J. H.'s primary impulse was set off by his wish to get rid of the black birds which forsook the Yucca section and have been concentrating around his house of late. Men with five or six shotguns appeared beneath some of the larger trees when twilight began. The waves of birds began winging in toward their accustomed pecan trees where they always alight before settling down into the bamboo. Naturally enough the flocks seemed utterly confused tonight when, on



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lighting atop the pecanes, they could discover no bamboo hedges below. The bang of shotguns would startle them from their temporary perches and waves made up of perhaps five hundred or so in vast banners would take off, some waves sailing off in one direction, some in another and all of the wheeling about, banking at sharp angles, some groups taking high altitudes other settling down in such low approaches to bushes that they suggested airplanes hugging the ground to escape radar interception. It was fascinating to watch the maneuvering and when it was all done, I guess there were as many birds in the gardens as last night but more widely dispersed. Many before now have attempted eradication of starlings from their favorite roosting places and I must say I think it takes a heap more than mere eradication of the bamboo hedges to effect the trick. The "Promouncement of words to the birds" seems to have been the most effective gesture thus far but hard headed business men aren't likely to examine that magic too closely.

I was delighted this afternoon when Bobby Deblieux dropped in for a little chat. I may have mentioned that he and his wife bought Juanita and Pat's house when they built a new one. We talked Hachitoches Art, the Hachitoches ante bellum painter, Moise, who did, among other people, the likenesses of I. S. Willard Sompayrac ancestors. The son of this painter became a Louisiana Supreme Court judge shortly after the Civil War and his career is pretty well documented but Moise, pere, still remains a little shadowy as a figure but I think we shall add some knowledge to the record before we get through with him.

Cousin Arthur called to give me some information about some current legal points on pending legislation and his wife then chatted with me about tomorrow when she and Ann W. Brittain are supposed to bring a flock of lawyers' wives down on Saturday evening. I learned from her that Ann is flattened out in bed with flu and so I shall not have much help with the 30 odd ladies but I can manage them alright, I guess if the weather is cooperative. And thus we head into another week end and I find myself wondering how the igloo situation may be in Lyme.....

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Sunday, March 6th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Ho, hum.....a busy week end, cloudy and cold yesterday, partly cloudy and continued cold tonight with a light mist falling tonight and more cold promised for the morrow but I had better enjoy the comparative leisure coming with cold days for I have a feeling Spring is going to explode all over the place any day and a busy summer season of physical labor will begin.

The slashing of the bamboo and the bursting of the burning polls punctuated most of Saturday morning while in the afternoon I got bogged down with wives of lawyers from all around the State. There were about half as many as I had expected. Ann W. Britton told me on the side that Cousin Arthur's wife who had engineered the afternoon entertainment, had seemed to channel the ladies to Beaufort only, explaining it was so cold down the river where the spaces were so much greater. This I can understand readily enough since Cousin Arthur's wife takes the same dim view of Melrose that the General's wife does. To her way of thinking, I suppose, there's no point in taking the wives of the leading lawyers of the State of rural slumming parties.

And so, what with a comparatively small number of ladies, everybody had much more fun and some of them were amazed and delighted with all they had to see. I recalled the name of a Mrs. Atcheson on meeting her and I made it a point to stress accomplishments of color, ante bellum and present. The lady appeared at once fascinated and almost dumbfounded and, on leaving, expressed an enthusiasm that was quite surprising and it wasn't all due to the wine served although that was of fair quality. The fact, as I had been advised beforehand, that Mrs. Atcheson is the daughter of the new Governor of Mississippi, --a noisy Citizens Council pillar, was a point that impelled me to prosylite as much as I did and she can take the news back to papa if she pleases or not.

This morning at 7, -- not Ora, --but the "ocket" called from Shreveport, saying she was heading for the Crescent City.



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would like to pass this way at 9:30 and show me the  
Echo of Empire film. I said that would be fine and that  
I dined at 11:30.

Before 8 o'clock, the telephone rang again. It was  
from some lawyer's wife in town, complaining that some of her  
New Orleans friends felt they had been side-tracked yesterday and  
that all last evening at the country club, a certain knot  
of ladies had taken up the evening extolling the charms of Melrose  
and therefore would I, as a special favor, permit some of the  
ladies to come this morning as they were returning to New Orleans  
on the 2 o'clock train. I would not. Five minutes later  
Ora called and told me the same tale and the answer was still But No.  
Ann called ten minutes later with the same wail and again I  
responded negatively. Then Mildred Cunningham called and  
again I said But No. She wondered if I would see some of them  
in the afternoon. I would. And did.

Carolyn pulled in promptly at 11:45, set up the projector  
and showed me the film on the white paneling of the living room.  
I thought it pretty nice, the spoken and music excellent and  
regretted only one or two minor errors of no importance. She  
wanted to see the Ghana Garden and, --of all things, --  
envisioned it as ideal for Warren when summer arrives.  
She had not seen the Ghana frieze before and wanted to inspect same.  
It was 11:40 before she was ready to pull out and my hostess  
across the fence was having the same distraught sensations  
that invariably arise if you are late but not if she is. And  
so the Rocket took off in her car, followed by her trailer and that  
was that.

I read rather later than usual last night, what with  
a new biography coming to hand. The title, Madame de LaFayette  
delighted me because I supposed it was going to be about  
Mme. de Sevigne's girl friend but it turned out to be  
about the wife of the Marquis de La Fayette. Constance Wright  
is the author, Henry Holt the publisher. It is a rather short  
but very excellent account of the woman, in many ways more  
remarkable than her much more advertised husband. I didn't  
know before that Jefferson, when the Louisiana Purchase went through,  
offered the job of Governor to the Marquis which, of course, was  
refused. I shall probably touch on this volume again. I hold  
the thought the snow may be vanishing in Lyme.....

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Monday, March 7th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy without rain and a little warmer, with  
a promise for the same thing on the morrow.

The Chinese firecrackers still continue exploding merrily  
along the trail of the bamboo hedges. I reckon it will be  
passed the middle of the week before the last bamboo has  
been cut and burned, so well did the birds make a  
ordian knot out of the hedges.

The high winds of a while back up-set the metal  
covering over the chimney serving my boudoir, permitting  
rain to cascade down into the fireplace every time  
God turns on the faucets. I mentioned the other day that  
I should like to have this point corrected and this morning  
two carpenters appeared at my door to take care of it.  
As they did not have a ladder long enough to reach to the roof,  
however, they fell to work repairing fences and what not, and  
after they had repaired some steps at little Miss  
Alberta's studio and made me four wooden benches for the  
Ghana garden, the day was done and the chimney  
covering hadn't been touched.

I had the benches made of wood in duplication of  
the size of the generous cement ones scattered about  
the Melrose garden, about two feet wide, perhaps and about  
four feet long. I like ample resting places for couples  
who might want to collapse on occasion and it will make  
a fairly comfortable parking place for the power mower operator  
in the summer time to rest for an hour or two when he should  
be cutting grass. I shall probably paint them before  
placing them on brick foundations at each corner  
of the garden, slap at the end of the paths leading  
toward the central circle of the garden, and as they are low, coming  
up only to about one's knee, they will retain the  
flatness of the general lines of the garden itself.



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There was a fairly heavy mail today but I got little or nothing read, what with too many interruptions at secretary time. There seems to be a long hand note from Kay, among other things. I only struggled through the An Cordell letter from up Eldorado way, fearing it might have something to say, which it didn't, about the peacocks. There seems to be a letter from Mrs. J. Lagrange Spinks, too, but I expect that is merely chit-chat and so that may wait, along with Kay's, for a more favorable sitting.

Having nothing to hand for next week's column, I shall probably knock off something tonight, using the biography of Mme. de Lafayette on which to stir up something and probably tossing in her husband's apron to add a bit of local interest. As I write the foregoing sentence, it occurs to me that perhaps there's a title in it, -- Her Husband's Apron, --and that ought to take care of the whole business.

The TalkingBook Edition of this biography is beautifully read by a lady whose name is something like Terry Sales or some such. Her voice is excellent and both her English and French well managed although, even as in the Rocket's film, there are one or two minor errors that aren't worth mentioning except for discovering the human frailties in mechanical perfection. A case in point is her pronunciation of "Champs de Mars", which she pronounces without including the "s", an omission of which would be as noticeable to a Parisian as would the sound of a voice, using the word, "Les Halles" by including the "s" which, of course, is never done by people in Paris. The real reason I mention these totally insignificant points is because I do not at all wonder the lady doesn't chance to know about "Mars" and its final "s" being pronounced but rather to remark again on the fact that A. Scourby, Esquire, would, by some magic I do not comprehend, would, as always, have hit them just right, even, as an extreme example of his extraordinary gift in pronunciation he should have pronounced the word, Natchitoches, just the way the residents of that place say it and that, you will agree is remarkable for someone who has probably never heard tell of the place except in print.

I noticed today the Rocket let a folder of sometime on the bidet and I enclose it, without knowing if it be of interest or not

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Tuesday, March 8th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Continued cloudy and cold.

The hedges are about down now but there still remains heaps of bamboo to be burned, piles higher than your head. I guess there must have been a dozen men hauling and burning all day but plenty remains for the morrow.

The enclosures speak for themselves. It was nice of Irma O'Brien to send along the likeness of Ghana, taken from the rear. Perhaps you can make out the wash pot at the left, if it got into the picture, and you may be able to see the cistern at the right, or, if it didn't get into view, at least the gutter leading to it. You will also notice what is not to be seen probably, --the frieze tucked up under the eaves which, I trust, is concealed.

That the O'Briens of North Hollywood should be taking unto themselves a family at this late date seems all to the good. Getting three daughters at ages of 14, 17 and 21 suggests that they will be comparatively free from having to worry about kindergarten problems anyway.

Ora called early this morning to report that, at long last, the Library at the local college is being more than cooperative, providing her with a special desk, file cabinet, sets of keys and Heaven knows what all.

She also reported that I couldn't imagine what a wail went up from the wives of lawyers who felt they had been side-tracked by Cousin Arthur's wife from making it to Melrose and how they moaned on Sunday they weren't able to get down before train time. Their resentment against the lady they felt had misled them reached such a pitch that the lady called Ora by way of defending herself, explaining that "there's nothing of any interest at Melrose ex-



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cept his personality".

Imagine.

I thought what Ora responded was to the point:

"Well, if that is what the ladies wanted, you must admit that is something they have a right to yearn for."

Smile.

J. H.'s presence at dinner at the big house today indicated that this was "Lodge" day for Celeste and that she must be luncheoning with the other girls at the country club and spending the afternoon at cards. Mother must have had a rest and so everyone was bound to have been happy about the whole business.

I can't recall for sure but I am under the impression I did not confide to you in yesterday's memo that I am a proud prospective grandfather. I must confess at the same time that I seem to be much more puffed up about the prospects that the parents, Emmet and Erwin. I was having the fence tightened up beneath the big magnolia, hard by the old sugar pot where one of the workmen discovered a little mound of leaves so artfully contrived as to be almost casual. Inside there were 10 eggs and this morning I discovered an eleventh. I reckon a dozen will about represent a total unless I can find somebody with a hen that seems to be in a mood to do a dab of settin', in which case, I shall remove the dozen and Erwin will go right on depositing another dozen in all probability, for such seems to be the custom among our feathered friends. Which ever way things turn, I am delighted at the prospect of becoming a grandfather but if Erwin doesn't hurry up and get the eggs warmed up real soon, the offspring will not be able to claim April Fool's Day as a natal one.....

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Wednesday, March 9th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A pretty nice day, sort of 65-70, mostly sunny and a north wind that wasn't cold. It was interesting that Shreveport was 48 this morning, Alexandria 61 at 6:20, the difference due to a cold wave that rolled over Shreveport at 4 a.m. but was have got stalled over Briarwood or some such.

Tonight the moonlight is so lovely and the temperature almost warm enough to tempt me to engineer a musicale on the back gallery. There are two or three huge white, snow white clouds resting on the northern horizon. I should have been able to make them out, had the hedges been standing, for the one at the far end of the white garden would have cut them off from view. The moon is reflecting on them, giving added light to a night already beautifully golden and for a moment, I don't miss the hedge. The final mountains of bamboo were consumed by fire today and the house still holds a vague atmospheric suggestion of the stuff that was blowing in this direction all day. I noticed while inspiring helpers that here and there a new bamboo shoot is already pushing up from the ground and, assuming summer may make its bow any day now, a nice, fresh, tender green hedges will again be forming my own beloved bamboo curtain, screening out the world beyond and from Yucca leaving me only the sky for magnificent distances.

While I think of it, I want to mention a couple of remarks, dropped by the Rocket during her breezy pause around noon on the Sabbath. One was that she didn't think Ola Mae was in any hurry about getting an Uncle Tom manuscript since she has just acquired a new home and is accordingly quite busy. The second thing was that after many years of doing Hodges publicity for nothing, she has at last pointed out this fact to that gentleman, suggesting that something be done about a financial consideration for future efforts. It will be interesting to see what, if anything results from this. Personally, I



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think Mr. Hodges is incapable, as so many very rich people seem to be of imagining other people have to have some kind of an income. It seems such apity that such rich people don't know how to have fun by making their less well heeled associates happy by taking care of bank note showers now and then. Even though the Lord has charged him little or nothing for all the time and labor she has on his pet projects, I can find no excuse for Mr. Hodges not feeling compelled to make some gesture of just payments if not generous hand-outs. After all, there was a fundamental truth in the Anita Loos opus when one of her characters remarks that while having one's hand kissed is all very fine but that a diamond bracelet last forever. Obviously nobody has ever pointed out this fact of life to Mr. Hodges and, unless he doesn't seem to have sufficient imagination to realize that he ought to be sharing with others, especially those he specifically employs, some of the maximum of the stuff with which he is possessed.

I thought of Edith Hamilton tonight when the subject of invitation to Learning discussed Aristotle's Poetics, particularly on the segment having to do with Tragedy. Someone brought up the difference in concepts on one point or another as voiced by Plato and Aristotle and then I could almost hear Miss Hamilton responding so positively to the question as to which of the Greek philosophers she thought the greater, Plato or Aristotle and how emphatically she declared that Plato was the greatest of them all. I was so much on the jump today, I find myself prematurely sleepy tonight and a flock of muscles that could stand a good going over by an expert Swedish or, preferably, a trained Ghana masseur. But in the absence of either, I think I shall take to a tub of hot water rather than parking on the gallery and fold up early to listen to some of the crack-pot, fraudulent purveyors of prayer clothes that clutter up so many of the air waves nightly before 10 o'clock. I'm inclined to think I shall make a mental note of the most outrageous one I stumble across and dash off a note, requesting one of the rags with the idea of making use of it for a column one of these days.....

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Thursday, March 10th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, --in the 40's, --but none of the showers appeared although neighboring towns reported drizzles.

I was happy this morning when half a dozen men began work at putting a new roof on the old barn, hard by the gourd garden. From a utilitarian point of view, it has never served a particular purpose in all the years I have known it, but it has a roof line like ucca and strikes a nice note from the Ghana garden and at the same time tends to serve as a partial screen for the gourd garden, between it and the big road. There was much talk recently about using it elsewhere on the plantation as a hay barn and I'm glad pragmatism lost out for once.

I got a crew of 14 or 18 mento give the river bank in front of Melrose a much needed manicure. Trash was piled in heaps and burned as the work went on, --that is bamboo and smaller stuff was burned but some of the bigger things were placed beside the road to be hauled to cabins of the workmen. Two of the big oaks in front of the old store site were taken down, too. They really shouldn't be described as big since their trunks aren't more than a couple of feet in diameter, I reckon but they did take up lots of room and there were so many that none could take on good shapes, thus crowded.

A mechanical saw is used and trees fall with wonderful speed, once the saw gives a tree the kiss of death. I suppose a couple of hundred willows along the river bank toppled into the water 200 minutes after the business began. The willows are not more than 8 or 10 inches thick and being soft wood, they supply little resistance. It always seems somehow such a waste to simply topple them into the river but the wood is no good and while going to pieces in the water, they probably supply excellent playgrounds for aquatic life all around them.



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At coffee this morning, I learned the lady doctor has the same affliction that silenced I. S. Willard last October. She continues making her rounds but cannot speak above a whisper. Celeste said the lady doctor had told the hospital yesterday that Carmen might be taken home today if the weather turned out to be pretty. Well, the weather didn't turn out that way but they took Carmen home rega dress, according to her sister, who telephoned me tonight about 8.

From the enclosure, you will note that Cousin Emmet has lost a floor lamp, microscope and so on, --an odd combination in a way. Durign the past week, Cousin Emmet seems to have been very busy, attending hate mongering meetings at which the Governor of Mississippi and so on have been attending somewhere in New Orleans. I am hoping our friends made the most of the opportunity to collect a few things while he was busy trying to make life mserable for them.

There's a scuffle in the Uncle Tom business again which is dull enough. The Evans-Worth contingent offered the State of Louisiana the new version of the cabin and a parcel of ground on which it stands. The offer of such gifts is first submitted to the State Commissioners on Parks, or some such title. My old friend, Sudie Laughton, is on the aforesaid Board, an Earl Long appointee. Inasmuch as Jack Britton of Watson, Williams and Britton did much drum-beating to get the cabin constructed, and inasmuch as Watson and Williams was the law firm opposing Sudie when she pulled down the Christmas lights on the magnolia a few years ago, Sudie turned thumbs down on the cabin offer.

When Earl goes out of office in May, the new Governor will appoint new Park Commissioners and they, of course, will be more favorable to the State accepting the gift. Personally, I am quite indifferent to the whole business but since Sudie and r. Eugene Watson are both rabidly opposing the Uncle Tom thing, I am naturally in favor of the thing and so I shall follow the next step with added interest.

Three times during the jotting down of this memo I have been interrupted by the telephone. The caller was the same in each instance, my artist neighbor, obviously on the high side and expressing astonishment that she got me every time as she thought she was dialing Pa. By the time the four buzz had come through, I fairly bit the receiver as I said Hello, only to hear Mrs. Walker opine that she must have been out of order to call me at such an hour. My bite provided us both with a laugh and gave me the pleasure of hearing a voice that was obviously sober! And so the day unfolds and refolds and so must I begin the

80401

10407

Friday, March 11th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Heavy clouds and cold this morning, brilliant sunshine and chilly this afternoon, velvety moonbeams tonight and still air-ish.

At coffee, Celeste was busy with plans about bringing her mama home, wheel chair, hydraulics for lifting her, nurses and s. She also had a message from Mary Page, asking if I could accompany the latter to Fort Jessup this afternoon. I could.

And so I devoted my morning to supervising the final work in pretty-ing the river bank in front of Melrose and at 12:30, headed out for town, Mary Page to pick me up at the hospital at one. This gave me an opportunity to step into Madam Regard's room but only a step in and out, because I have been having a bit of a cold-cough of late, and naturally, I didn't want to linger. I was surprised at the frailty of the patient. She reminded me of a beautiful single rose which one leaves in its vase at sundown in full knowledge that with the dawn, its petals will be strewn on the table below. On our way home tonight, Celeste said that in spite of all her plans of this morning, she was convinced that J. H. was right and that her mother should continue at the hospital "for a while". I felt the hospital was the place for her.

But getting back to Mary Page, she picked me up and I enjoyed the opportunity to chat with her on the way westward, along the same route one travels going to Hodges Gardens. We talked a little of her impending round the world trip which begins in a week or less and will last for four months. She is going with 15 other ladies in spite of the fact that she has pretty good sens and travels in Europe by herself quite a lone or with her daughter. Mrs. Page has a pretty house in Natchitoches, I am told, and at Robeline I saw another house, a big one, which is also hers and which she keeps ready for occupancy at all times. We stopped around the corner to pick up some soft soap for the gourds I had brought along for Fort Jessup. And from Robeline we continued westward for a few miles until we reached the Fort. Actually, it is only a portion of the old barracks or a reproduction of one of the old barracks and looks mighty pretty for what it is.



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immediately apologized for the strange letter he had written me months back. He seems possessed of imagination and knowledge of his subject and I guessed he probably had been high when he wrote me the somewhat pointless letter. He has done a lot of things by way of collecting pictures and documents on and about the subject of Jessup in the 1820's to 1840's. I think he likes to make maps that light up in various appropriate places at the touch of a button and I think he likes to make stands on which documents and maps can be displayed, and he has made such and there they stand in a vast room that looks wonderfully barren.

While we were chatting, Clara Knott of Many, the Governor's sister put in an appearance. She looks more like Earl than Huey and is about his age, I guess. She is a little wind swept in appearance, too, after the Mormon manner and is thick as thieves with Sudie Lawton. On the side, Mr. Watson said she raises Hell one day because you haven't anticipated something she wanted done and the next day she raises Hell because you have done what yesterday she wanted. She had to take me to the original old kitchen, perhaps a quarter of a mile from the barracks. There were some interesting things there but the only thing she wanted me view was a fine dipper gourd of which I have only about a million scattered around Yucca.

Mr. Watson said her had heard from Daisey in the Dell yesterday that she is coming for the official opening of the place on Sunday, March 27th when Earl and lots of dignitaries will jam the place. Daisey in the Dell wants to do an article for the Houston Chronicle, I was given to understand.

On our way back home, we stopped in Robeline where I was introduced to several people, three different ones being kind enough to volunteer they read Cane River Memo although that column had not been mentioned. We also stopped just off the highway, perhaps half a mile, to visit the sites of Los Años and Nuestra Señora de la Pilar and I was delighted to have my memory refreshed.

I was back home by sundown but all the secretaries, if any, had come and gone and so I have several letters, including an air mail from Lyme, tucked away in my armoire awaiting the morrow and I await the morrow with impatience.....

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10409

Sunday, March 13th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Saturday fair and cold, Sunday the same thing.

It was so good to enjoy such a pleasant communion with little Miss Lee over the week end, thanks to the Wednesday air mail.

I have so much enjoyed the clippings and the enclosures, too. I was sorry, of course, to learn of the Jafy death for he was an architect devoted to the building on which he labored and that added concern about the particular project seemed to give something special to much he undertook. I recall as though it were yesterday the privilege I once had in exploring the court yards on to which some of little apartments gave, places, I believe few people know much about as they were usually the exclusive concern of people like the architect and the curator, and the marvelous insight to a vast machinery of chateau life in the 18th century and an opportunity to explore the apartments of Mme. de Pompadour on the top floor, giving out on the gardens to the North leading to the Neptune fountain, and from those two gentlemen, it seemed to be one was given a comprehension of a way of life that was as exquisite as it was remote from the balance of the world, so ignorant of the very existence of such delicious retreats.

And it goes without saying I am delighted to have the folio on the Sterling Forest project. I am going to do a bit of correspondence in that direction which, I take it,

must be on a scale not unlike the Hodges domain. Having known the one years ago, it will be interesting to see how it turns in relation to the local project. I must say I find I am heartened by the knowledge that this folder suggests, --to wit, that the Forest may be maintained intact, in part, at least, so that it will thus avoid being suddenly swallowed up whole-sale by suburbia.

It goes without saying, of course, that I shall be interested to learn what will emerge from the advent of this week end of father and son and let us hold the thought that the father may find it advantageous to return with the son or some such since the present situation is bound to be so unsatisfactory all around under existing circumstances.

Lestan, of course, was especially delighted to have news of Egon.



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Knowing the wives of Egon and the merchant-planter, I suppose the same parallels I found in them are apparent to little Miss Lee. I am wondering if Egon's wife ever grew any -- be-latedly -- or if as in the case of the merchant planter, about the same stage of childhood remains.. If I had known, I must have forgotten the news concerning Egon's surviving relative who perished during the war. In view of Egon's civilized viewpoint toward military things in general, the cause of the parent's death must have been more stirring, even as in the case of Dr. Sweitzer's mother in the earlier war, than on may a loser who gave less thought to the outrageous aspects of military stupidities in general.

I'm so glad to have news of the Flower Show. The account of the daffodill garden, its water-fall, its dawn, noon and dusk changes sound magnificent. There's always something about the Flower Show, even though it unfolds before winter departs, it must hold something of a promise regardless, and especially at a season when, as at present, snow and slush and cold have been so much the order of the day.

Ora called me Satu day morning at 6. She didn't have anything in particular to say although it was interesting to hear that her son-in-law, Jack, had been in Mansfield, in North Louisiana, on Tuesday, I believe, and that there he had been present at a gathering in which the Rocket also participated. From that, I conclude, the visit to New Orleans that was under way last Sunday noon must have been of brief duration.

The artist 'phoned between 8 and 9 this morning to say she could see two or three cars and many ladies-folks at the Rand camp. What the ladies could have been doing out of doors, I cannot imagine, as it was too chilly for a fete champetre.

It appears likely that Zelma may be cooking at the big house for a week or two and I love Zelma's cooking. Doreatha visited the lady-doctor on Saturday and was told she must take time off from the kit and go to Shreveport to have a tumor removed. She and Zelma are good friends and so everyone will be pleased with the new substitute.

So begineth another week that will, let us hope, spell out the end of winter and the commencement of spring.....

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Monday, March 14th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cold and sprinkly but please the Lord no snow.

It was such an unexpected plaisir to find a good letter from Lyme in today's post, together with the clippings, all of which I lapped up with relish.

The week end sounded like a bang-up and it goes without saying I shall be interested to learn how it all unravels.

I appreciate your advice regarding the new ribbon. I think I shall be able to arrange for the desired adjustment on the morrow.

The Uncle Tom business is so undying in its career. My friend, Sudie Lawton, got her chance to take a crack at Watson, Williams and Britton for their part in the Christmas decorations on the magnolia a couple of years ago since, as a member of the Board of Parks, she could swing a rejection of the cabin. Of course, the State and the Parish are trying to attract tourists and the Uncle Tom thing holds more magic than anything else but the legend is not to be tollerated by Sudie and the rejection, which she drew up for the Park Board, will be published in its entirety this coming Thursday in the Enterprise.

I was interested in the commercial matter outlined in the other clipping. I had complained to Station WWL and to CBS because, not only were New Orleans commercials getting too numerous, which was bad enough, but they were beginning to chop up news items to insert the commercials, and, especially for one dependent on the radio for news, I can think of nothing more frustrating than having a news story started and then blotted out when half way through by somebody trying to sell paint or cars or whatever.

Ann Britton called me this morning, saying that Jack had rounded up a flock of Methodist youngsters for an all day picnic at Hodges Gardens on Good Friday week end and she and Jack thought I might like to accompany them to supervise the youngsters. I cannot imagine why she should



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suppose I should like to devote a day of my life at Hodges Garden in such company. I lied and said I had that week end all taken up but that I appreciated her thought. She was calling from the office and an interruption broke off the conversation.

J. H. spent the day in Shreveport where it is said things are by sixes and sevens but I shall not learn details until the morrow. There was talk of Dr. Wenk getting a Seeing Eye dog which would require him to go where ever, perhaps Illinois or New Jersey to spend a month getting acquainted with the dog. I hold the thought this may not inspire the family or any part thereof to spend a month in the country.

I. S. Willard called me this morning, having returned home from South Louisiana last night. She had seen James and Kay yesterday and says that Kay is now so rigged up as to be able to operate her typewriter and seems to be getting along just fine. She said James is looking splendid, too. Perhaps we shall begin hearing from that quarter shortly, now that things are in such fine order.

I. S. W. said she was in New Orleans earlier in the week and saw the P. D. Schaeffers and the Warren Ogdens. The Warren Ogdens are going to Vienna and Paris in May. They stressed the fact that their trip was one of pleasure, leading I. S. W. to conclude there must be some business attached to it.

Another telephone had to do with the Lost Plantations column. Some knew Bigelow Payne of New York some years ago when he was still serving as literary executive or executor of Mark Twain's estate. At the time he mentioned having been through the Cane River country taking snapshots of old homes and the films were in his files. He died a while back and his children don't know where these films are but, if discovered, they will be made available which is pleasant to contemplate as a possibility.

I'm glad to have news that somebody liked "Act One", but it does seem like quite a while since Christmas but we seem to know lots of people who get bogged down in correspondence. But, as you say, perhaps by the end of the month, we may be happily surprised and, as you know, I shall always be delighted to be kept abreast of how things turn in that quarter. I suppose that may have been a time that came up when Egon made his rounds recently. How much there is to chat about and how soon

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10413

Tuesday, March 15th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Rainy and cold. During the past 30 days, we have had twice the normal rainfall and the thermometer has "hoovered" 14 degrees below average. 1960's winter will long be remembered as a record breaker all across the country, I guess.

Well, the report from Shreveport was about in line with what one might expect. The doctor, smart man, now locks himself in his room and if anyone, including his wife, or should I say, especially his wife, wants to get in touch with him, she or they can telephone him, as he has a 'phone in his room for that purpose. Off hand, this might sound a little wacky for the usual menage but the Wenk one, of course, is anything but that.

On the Hatchitoches front, Pat has offered his house for sale at \$19,500.00. I know not if he really expects to sell it but there it is for sale at a handsome profit to the owner, it is said, if anyone wants to pay the price. What Pat has in mind to do is to sell the house if he can and build another on the adjoining lot for himself and family, since he wants another room and thinks he might have the thing built into a new house rather than having a room added. Obviously he doesn't mind moving as much as some people do.

Saturday's workmen, concentrating on the re-roofing of the old barn, took down the fence adjoining it to make their labors easier and, of course, neglected to put it back during the week end, --and the succeeding days of rain. Net result: the horses in the lot strolled over into the gourd garden and thence to Ghana. Along side Ghana stood an oil jar, one of those big old round ones about 4 feet in height. I had been keeping cobs of Indian corn in the bottom of the jar since rodents couldn't get, the sides of the jar being too slippery. But, to my surprise, the horses could get their heads and necks down into the jar, wit out upsetting the thing, which seems remarkable. And thus my India corn was eaten and the shucks and cobs scattered all over the place but I shall be able to



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get some more seed from various plantation friends to whom I gave aple for planting last season. It is pretty corn, having been brought to me by Kay from Arizona or some such place when she was returning from California last year by car, --a year ago November, I believe.

That disagreeable Dr. Eugene Watson, --Cousin Eugene, being Cousin Arthur's brother, came into focus in conversation over the coffee cups this morning when Celeste asked if J. H. had spoken to me about Cousin Eugene wanting to microfilm the scrapbooks. I said I hadn't seen J. H. within the last day or two. I think it an excellent idea to have the scrapbooks microfilmed, but, Lord, what a job for somebody before the work begins. As you know, Miss Cammie had the bad habit of sticking letters into the scrapbooks, sometimes pasting them in if they contained a paragraph pertinent to subject matter in a particular volume. She did this often without stopping to consider that often the letters were written to her and contained opinions and news items not for other eyes. For the people who are dead, --that is, the riters of these letters, it wouldn't matter so much if they were set forth on the library shelves, but for people like little Miss Dorman who are very much alive, even as are some of the people mentioned in her letters, the reproducing of this materia coul be fraught with miseres without end. We shall see what we shall see about the business but, in the mean time, I wish somebody would flatten out Cousin Eugene. Andy came to see me at sundown. He was just back from Alexandria where he had gone to bring back his brother, Albert, who has been in Charity hospital for a hernia operation. He said his siter, Aurellia, now Mrs. Ivy Lively, had 'phoned him at the store on Saturday, calling from Monroe, La., to sy her husband, Mr. Ivy Lively, is dying of cancer. The Bynog family seems to be having quite a run of hard luck. I am glad Andy's flu seems to be gradually disappearing. During the past couple of weeks his voice had been so effected as to make his speech sound like a whistle, which was at once both pitiful and hilarious.

In the kitchen, it is a great pleasure to have Zelma presiding over the pots and pans. She is a little larger than when last we saw her. She has always been one of my favorite characters and my days are the happier because of her presence, exuding, as it does, such an unfialing radiation of good will toward me

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Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1960.

Memorandum:

Sunny and cold today, cloudy and cold tonight.

I seem to be more or less alone tonight on the plantation. J. H. left before breakfast for New Orleans and Celeste is staying in town with her mama.

This noon, I was mildly taken aback when the clerk said that Celeste had just telephoned him at the store, being unable to reach me by 'phone and that she wanted to say that Cousin Eugene Watson and crew would be here at 2 o'clock to pick up the scrapbooks and take them to town to microfilm them. Celeste said to the clerk she assumed J. H. had spoken to me about it, even as he said he was going to. Of course, he hadn't mentioned the business to me.

After too many days without assistance, I at last had arranged for helpers this afternoon and I wanted to make the most out of that happy circumstances and so was doubly provoked when, not at 2 but at 1:40, Cousin Eugene and crew arrived. All the books on the back gallery were transported to a truck, much like a Greyhound and are tonight reposing in the college library, I suppose. Personally, I think it a good idea to have the books microfilmed but I should have liked to have had an opportunity to extract some of the personal letters that were either pasted into the books or otherwise attached. There is one considerable advantage in having them thus microfilmed, aside from having the record in duplicate, for once the library has microfilmed the books, there will probably be no more pressure from that quarter to get the books themselves away from their permanent home, --assuming they may be reutmed. And then, of course, there will always be an inducement for Cousin Eugene Watson to see to it that they are microfilmed promptly and returned for I have a feeling that by taking all the books on the back gallery, he may not have rounded up all of the scrapbooks for who could doubt that there might be quite a number that weren't on the back gallery. And that, in a manner of speaking, is that.

It was such an exceptional plaisir to discover a Monday air mail from Lyme in today's post and I'm enchanted to learn that the week end went off as pleasantly as it did although I can well imagine how exhausting it must have been, lasting as it did forever and well can I appreciate the secret resentment at having to lose programs that would be gone forever and reading that would be so difficult to catch up with. I shall



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be curious to know how the live show turned out and if it enhances or disenchants when one views it being performed other than on the TV screen. I can remember one or two radio shows I saw broadcast and, perhaps it was just chance in each case, but I didn't find them nearly so interesting as when received as a regular program over the air.

Tonight, Invitation to Learning did Othello and while everyone seemed capable enough in handling the subject, they somehow didn't seem to bring the session off with as much interest as usual. One got the impression that play was more about Iago than about Othello, that Iago was crafty and evil and Othello good but dumb. Perhaps this is another example of Shakespeare's primary characters getting out of hand, and I am not sure whether that was Shakespeare's intention or not. After all, in spite of the Merchant of Venice title, the characters in that play appear to emerge rather differently from the original intention, since it is said by the experts that Shylock, the Venetian merchant, was never intended to be the main character in the play which he turned out to be. The Merchant of Venice, of course, is forever being compared with Marlowe's Jew of Malta but I can't remember if the Maltese Jew in Marlowe's play got out of hand the same way Shakespeare's opus. Walter Cohen touched on the point that Othello was negro and Iago an Italian and that was about all there was to that, but possibly someone else discussing the matter might have gone further to see if they could pin characteristics on the one and the other of the main characters along racial lines. I doubt if Shakespeare knew much if anything about the negro and as the play itself was taken from some old story, a novel, that Shakespeare had converted into a play with life breathed into it by the Avon Bard, and so perhaps there isn't much to be said in that aspect of the problem the experts were dissecting.

I apologize for the dimness of this ribbon. Perhaps the one on the other machine is a little stronger and I shall use it for making the envelope. I hold the thought I may get this one "threaded up" on the morrow.

A call from Crockett, Texas, tonight from some gentleman named Whiteside or some such, Virgil Whitesides, I believe, who wrote me the other day, asking if he and a flock of people could come some Saturday or Sunday, I thought, and I responded saying I could see them on a Sunday. Tonight's call indicated I must have misread the letter and he wanted to come on a Saturday because his girl friend from Austin, Texas, couldn't make it on a Sunday. I told him Saturdays were impossible. He said he is leaving shortly for some geological work at the North Pole during the summer but hopes to get back in time for Pilgrimage in October and I told him that would be fine. And now for a dab of work, after saying again

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Thursday, March 17th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Fair and cold.

From only one little phrase in tonight's news, did I gather that St. Patrick had poor weather in Lyré, too, leading me to believe that Spring is being coy all over the place.

In spite of the cold north wind, or, rather perhaps because of it, I was sent some assistants at dawning. One or two, like Mitchell, the are, allowed as how it was too cold to work out of doors and I agreed and sent all such shivering folks home. But there were some who thought jumping about would keep them sufficiently warm to "make a day", and thus we went to work.

I was especially pleased that in this group there were a couple who understand the rare art of plumbing and so we hooked up some water pipe in one yard and ran it slap into the Ghana garden, covering the same against future freezes. And so we now have a source of water in the center of the place, thus enabling me to sprout vegetables and flowers with vast abandon, assuming, of course, that seeds ever get planted and temperatures go sufficiently high to germinate same.

I was happy to get some more crepe myrtles moved, too, for any day now the thermometer is going to start moving upward and at the same time the sap will be mounting, too, and transplanting will be out of order for another season.

It was nice hearing from Kay and it was nice hearing from James but somehow James seems to be in a faraway mood or do I simply imagine that he isn't bubbling over with merriment that, perhaps, may be explained by the domestic setup although it seems to me his letter are much farther between these days and contain less of personal animation than at some periods.



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OSPOT

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With the turning of the page, I skipped across the fence, as it is now nearly 10, thinking to touch a match to the gas logs to remove the chill, for I suppose J. H. will be in sometime tonight and a dab of warmth strikes me as a great help when one enters a solitary house late in the night.

I was pleased to see quite a few stars and to note that momentarily, at least, it has turned a little warmer although, in spite of that, we shall have a little freeze again tonight, the prediction being for a 28 reading before morning.

I dipped into one or two articles in the March Reader's Digest this evening and found myself a little surprised at the Digest article about Catholicism and politics. I think the Digest isn't taking any particular stand on any Presidential campaign although I must say that the article seems to suggest that a man with Jack Kennedy's religion as a candidate offers something to the electorate on which the latter should ponder. I am sure Mr. Kennedy to get the nomination, I should not be too entranced because I have never quickened to his personality although I have admired him and his works. I guess the truth is that my heart is still set on having the former Governor of Illinois as the

next President that nobody else could possibly fill me with enchantment.

Another article that I found arresting was about the Moslem leader of negro segments of society in the land. It seems to me a timely article and one which the racial bigots should read although they probably will not. It is deplorable that the negro may be led to be as bigoted, racially, as the whites, but perhaps it is only some such move that will wake up the cheap politicians. I must say I think the apathy of Mr. Eisenhower and his failure to give leadership, racially, every since Little Rock, is most lamentable. I am so glad the college students are making a racket about soda fountain service in the five and dime stores and I'm thinking about the silliness of the whole business and how I once viewed a couple of lady hill-billies working like slaves behind a soda fountain in Woodville, Mississippi, serving customers

Friday, March 18th, 1960.

Memorandum:

28 and cloudless this morning but there were heavy gray draperies to the North and at 8 o'clock it snowed in Hatchitokes. Down this way, save for an occasional big puffy, white cloud against an intensely blue sky, the sunshine remain brilliant and there was even a suggestion that winter might be over although there wasn't much

suggestion of Spring around the thermometer. We are promised fine weather and warmer readings for the week end and may it be the same in Lyme.

The surprise of the day came in two parts, the first being the enclosure telling of Elythe's hospitalization but not telling much. The second surprise was the arrival of Sister and daughter just at supper time so that Zelma had to start all over again and so supper was late and so, because of the prolonged lingering at table by Sister and me, I missed my usual news programs.

Sister had much to say about the hard life she is living. She says her husband put John in jail at Christmas time. She says her husband won't let her issue checks because he has been in five auto accidents, each time being drunk and therefore they won't let her have a car. If this seems a little wacky to you, then you know how it seems to me. Apparently she doesn't know the news of her own accident is common knowledge. It is possible, of course, she doesn't even know the newspapers reported her own accident while intoxicated.

Be that as it may, she isn't able to drive a car and cannot have a car because of her husband's accidents, she says, but she has made arrangements with a lady lawyer who will keep Sister's car in her name but let Sister operate it.

Her husband is simply impossible to live with, she says, and she would leave him and come here to live if she didn't hate the place so much. She plans to remain until tomorrow or Sunday.



11401

10420

I caught a glimpse of Celeste at the store about 11 this morning but she was in too big a hurry to say more than that she didn't have time to say Howdy to anyone. Mother, it seems, had to have the lady doctor this morning and Celeste just hasn't time for anything. Well, tonight she is having time to entertain Sister and daughter and the state of mind in which Sister appears to be and the tension Celeste demonstrated this morning suggest tonight's session ought to be quite a fandango.

I was happy to have several helpers today and by dint of much doings, we finished repairing the gourd trellises and enlarging the space they cover. We also did much transplanting and general gardening so that planting may begin almost any time.

Mrs. Walker called me this morning to read me an editorial in the Shreveport Times about Uncle Tom's cabin. I appreciated her cooperation in acquainting me with the contents so that I could speak with some comprehension about it when it would come up at table, as it did. I asked that the editorial be sent me and so I shall be able to enclose it along about Monday or Tuesday. The editorial is a typical Shreveport one and takes the opposite position I do in regard to Uncle Tom's Louisiana's legends. So far as I know, nobody objects to a statue of Evangeline at St. Martinsville and surely Evangeline is no more thoroughly fictional than Uncle Tom. The Shreveport Times, however, being racially bigoted, naturally doesn't want to remember slavery in the South. But the point of the editorial that was interesting to local readers was because it stressed the point that Natchitoches is an historic place with sufficient real historical sites so that trumping up something fictional isn't necessary, and, apropos of nothing, the editorial remarks that it is to be hoped that if such an historic place as Melrose should ever be put on the market, it would be hoped that the Henry family would turn it over to the State. Miss Cammie and Lyle are mentioned but, naturally enough, nothing is said about Marie Therese or the African buildings which certainly find themselves enough in strange company to be the pivot of an editorial suggestion and recommendation by a paper so die-hard anti-color as the Times. The efforts on Leston's part to bring the place into focus of people around the State

SS401

10421

Sunday, Marcy 20th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Two perfectly lovely days, vaguely cool but definitely manifesting Spring wick, indeed, arrived at 8:42 this morning. And, as though to underline the fact, four hours earlier I heard three different wedges of wild geese honking northward in the pre-dawn hours.

As for the week end guests, they remained until this morning. here is no question about it, Sister was in a state of extreme mental hysteria. I gather insane jealousy may be the root of her present wackiness. She has always had to have a "whipping boy", being, as she is, of a nature that says nothing pleasant about anyone and constantly feels the necessity for denouncing somebody. She complains that everyone is so sympathetic toward her husband but nobody feels sorry for her. She claims her husband had their son, Joh, arrested at Christmas time, whereas, according to J. H., it was not the doctor but she herself. Of course it was too ridiculous for words when she declared the reason she couldn't have auto insurance was because the doctor had been in four accidents lately, driving while drunk each time. How anybody with a grain of sanity would suppose a blind doctor would be driving a car, I cannot imagine. I think she was quite taken aback when J. H. told her he had seen name in the paper as being the one arrested for drunken driving. she never reads anything, including the papers, she probably never dreamed the notice appeared in the papers.

So often during the past 20 years I have seen her come right up to the brink of insanity and then, at the last second draw back. I suppose one may expect the same pattern to continue forever but one cannot help wondering if one day she will lose her balance on the brink and end up with her brother in the asylum.

Well, so much for that aspect of the week end. Needless to say the presence of such unpredictable people make getting any sort of work done and accordingly I could welcome the quiet with enthusiasm when it finally arrived and I could begin some work on a dozen fronts without the probability of interruptions every five minutes.



15101

10422

As sometimes happens on Saturday morning, when the plantation for the week is about wound up and a couple of hours remain to make it a half day at labor, several men were sent for me to give employment and so I got quite a lot done that I had calculated on having to wait until Monday to accomplish,-- spading, trim ming and such like. I set two carpenters to work putting in panes from the fan light in little Miss Alberta's house, the recent high winds having loosened them from their places and tossed them on to the lawn without breaking them. The men finished that job in such a jiffy, there was still an hour to go and so I suggested they build me a couple of bird houses for the martins which adore high points to nest in. There are two telephone poles running from little Miss Albert's house along the dividing line between the gourd garden and the Ghana garden and I thought the top of each pole would make excellent sites for the martins' houses. They will be elevated to their pinnacles this week, after which, I shall tie some bamboo poles around the telephone or electir wire poles and plant gourds all around the base so that vines and gourds may grace and perhaps more or less conceal the poles themselves and I think the martins will adore the business.

I have heard nothing more about Elythe. Perhaps Joan Frantz or one or another of the children will drop me a card but the children aren't much on writing and so I don't lean too heavily on the hope of hearing from them.

A letter to hand from -- of all people -- la Montespan, obviously trying to insert a wedge in. I ran through the thing very quickly and haven't taken the address as yet so shall send along the letter later. I find it an interesting coincidence that, in view of what transpired here last week, she should have used as an excuse for writing the suggestion that the scrapbooks be micro-filmed.

The five day forecast from the Weather Bureau indicates we may expect fair, dry weather straight ahead. This means that all the ploughs will be turning at a great rate and I probably shall have to say Goodbye to helpers with strong arms until another Saturday morning. I am glad most of my stuff

15101

10423

Monday, March 21st, 1960.

Memorandum: I have been thinking of writing you for some time but have been so busy that I could not find time. A lovely Spring day, brilliant but still a little chill.

I am employing this old machine which works with less facility than the Royal but I hope the ribbon is a little stronger and at the same time, I hope the new ribbon may get "threaded up" on the other by tomorrow.

By the same post by which this memo goes forward, so also starts a natal day package, my thought being that it might be more convenient to have it arrive a day or two ahead of time and thus not tangle up festivities possibly planned for the middle of the week. I fear the business to hold down papers may prove a little too cumbersome. When making the package, I found a recent Historical Quarterly or some such and tucked it in. If it is the one I think it is, you will probably find the article about one or two Louisiana Jews quite interesting as did I. I am referring to a second item in the package in this coming Thursday's Cone River Memo. I shall try to clip the memo and forward it by air in Friday's post so you may have it by the time the package reaches you although the memo itself contains nothing new or novel about it but was simply written with little Miss Lee in mind to give her some notion as to my feelings about the item in question.

I coffee-ed across the fence this morning just before the lady took off for Alexandria to visit her favorite chiropodist and do some shopping. She didn't mention Elythe but I hold the thought she may have taken time out to make inquiries regarding her progress. She asked me if I found Sister telling taller tales than usual.

I had to confess I found none of them any taller but, on the other hand, none of them shorter. She said that on Sunday morning she came over to her house and excitedly shouted that a huge rat in the big house during the night had carried off her step-ins. A second later, J. H. came in and Celeste remarked to him that something ought to be done about the big house if rats were so enormous they were carrying off guests' clothing. Sister said that hadn't actually happened but that her daughter had seen a mouse that might well grow up some day, reaching such a size that it might carry off a sock. That's so typical of everything dished out from that quarter.



83401

10424

Today's post brought a letter that seemed more like old times from James. I was interrupted in the reading of it and hope to get a chance to run through it interruption.....

As I turned the page, I. S. Willard 'phoned. She has been somewhere and has just returned home and departs in a day or some for somewhere else and ends up Bastrop, La., which is somewhere far to the northeast, --as a matter of fact, the place where Aaron Burr had acquired land that was to be his seat of operations when he started down the Mississippi, getting no further than Natchez on his ill fated schemes with old Wilkinson to take over Mexico or some such. At Bastrop this coming week end the ladies of the press hold conclave and I. S. Willard will attend, although in what capacity, I know not.

As I disconnected myself from the Willard saga, the 'phone rang again and it was Mrs. Walker who had consulted with the lady doctor today and was advised by the latter that she should skip to the hospital for some tests which she declined doing for at least a couple of weeks as she is going to Bastrop this coming week end and then entertains some Pennsylvanias, returning home from Mexico, the following week end. One really doesn't have time for health matters. She said what she really called for was to tell me that she had been in conference with Cousin Arthur Watson today and apropos of nothing at all, he confided to her that only recently he had started reading C.R.M. and opined that he had immediately become infatuated with same. Such a statement from that quarter was certainly unexpected and almost as puzzling as that of the hill-billy mentioned a day or so ago, engaged in the same business of wasting time on public print.

Another semi-sign of Spring's advent turned up today in the form of Mr. Bordelon who guarantees to keep homes free from various and sundry types of insects which, if carried out, is quite an achievement in this clime. He operates out of Marksville, perhaps 60 or 70 miles south of here and I must hasten to add that it always strikes me as gently fabulous that one is offered and receives service of this nature from such a distance. Mr. Bordelon is one of those little men who may fit into the simple adjective, --nimble. In less than 20 minutes, I believe, he had thoroughly soaked the inside of Yucca, including the removing of dresser drawers and, after squirting stuff in returning them, in and about all the shelves of books, inside and outside of armchairs, etc., etc., and somehow tucked in the same job of the entire big house and all within the limited period, and withal, departed for a month when he will return, equally nimble, I trust. And now I must nimbly splash through a bath and thence to my downy couch.....

83401

10425

Tuesday, March <sup>22nd</sup> 23rd, 1960.

Memorandum:

A beautiful day, so summery that it was pleasant to have all windows and doors open to catch any chance breeze that might pass, but none put in an appearance.

At coffee, Celeste told me about Blythe. She said that when she had arrived in Alexandria, she had 'phoned the hospital and learned Blythe's room number was 414. She stopped somewhere to buy a little remembrance and out of or on her way out of the shop, she bumped into Ed Rand, remarking to him that she was just heading out for the hospital to see his mother. He said he knew his mother would be glad to see her but---she had already been taken home. Blythe had been in south Louisiana and Ed Rand said she must have eaten some food that wasn't up to standard. But now she is apparently alright or at least sufficiently on the mend to be able to go home and so I reckon she will be heading up this way one of these days since she has one of those constitutions that bubble too fast to permit a patient much time for recuperation.

I must try to remember to get hold of a copy of today's Shreveport Times. I believe they take it at the store. It seems that Sudie Lawton, some lady whose name I forget, but a friend of Sudie's and C. Dormon of Briarwood all wrote letters to the Times, probably at Sudie's dictation, applauding the Uncle Tom editorial. I shall relish an opportunity to read the letter from Carrie and then hasten to this machine and denounce her in round terms.

Sudie is out for blood against Watson, Williams and Britton, having declared when they represented the city in the Sudie-Olive Long racket about the Christmas lights on the magnolia that she would sooner or later get even with the firm and since Jack backed the Uncle Tom thing and Sudie could take a crack at the law firm through the Uncle Tom thing, she did so.

Of course, Sudie is a fool to let her vindictiveness alienate the powers that be needlessly. Her husband is in some form of senility, having been driven to drink, it is said by



10426

10426

Sudie, according to people who don't like her but senile he is, regardless of the cause. Their house in town has been sold and it is said they are coming down into the Bermuda section, I believe, to live. I must say in personal contact, she has always been as sweet as a peach to me but I hope she doesn't come any closer than Bermuda.

Zelma continues to make my days the happier by her presence in the kitchen. She is always just the same great big, lovin' Aunt Jemima with a heart of pure gold. Each evening when she comes to prepare supper, she brings one of her granddaughters with her, -- usually Emmalee, Solomon, daughter of Little King. Emmalee is now 10 and is among the brighter youngsters I have run across and she and I always have fun if we get a chance to clown a bit before the other people come in response to the supper bell.

Dr. Taylor of L. S. U. was supposed to come up from Baton Rouge to see me today but his plans got knocked out and so he called to say he would make an appointment for sometime later. I believe there was a death in the family or some such. I think he doesn't want to see me so much as he probably wants to see Melrose for I believe he plans a symposium on the subject.

At the hour he was supposed to arrive, however, came Father Wilson of the Episcopal Church in town, a man whose mind travels along parallel paths with my own and whenever we get together, we both seem eager to discover what position the other has taken regarding events that have transpired during the interim. Today we did quite a bit about South Africa but as we were pretty much in the same boat as regards the stupid laws in South Africa, so long such a scandal, we couldn't work up any sort of a disagreement. Even as I, so he feels all this five and dime store stuff is tomfoolery and we both hope the struggle will go on in both the lunch counter and library wars currently in progress until some sort of a sensible solution has been reached.

There are one or two enclosures of no particular interest but I send them along regardless. If especially rushed and possessed of no time to read them, you may chuck them with the assurance you will have lost nothing.

By the time this memo reaches your true hand, birthday week will have begun and your schedule will be a busy one. I do hope the weather may be pleasant and that all the things planned by way of festivities may hold no end of delight. I always think of so many similar occasions in the Lyme area all about the same time and I do hope they all unravel just as you would have them.....

10427

10427

Wednesday, March 23rd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Another perfect Spring day.

The Enterprise called me early this morning to read me some letters from the Shreveport Times, commending in its Letters to the Editor section the stand taken by the editorial about Uncle Tom. They were signed by W. W. Wells of the Park Commission, Mrs. Congor of Arcadia, a friend of Carrie's and some other bad whose identity I forget or rather whose name I forget. I took time out to write Carrie a note, making a duplicate which I attach.

Tonight I shall write a column for next week under some such title as "Legends Never Die" so that next week the controversy may be kept bubbling a bit.

I liked tonight's Invitation to Learning, having to do with Milton's Samson. Anne Freemantle and Francis Godolphin seemed so sympathetic as personalities with much. I liked one point made, --the difference between Greek and Christian plays, -- Greeks being those of necessity, Christian those of possibilities. It may be true but it is certainly frustrating when the Greeks are so Calvinistic that everything appears predestined so that nobody can break through a life pattern, fashioned in advance, no matter how hard he strives. The Christian concept, on the other hand, so often pre-supposes that people can fashion their own careers whereas it would seem that they have no capacity to combat an over-powering Fate. Les Miserables is up for discussion next week and the following week, "a new series, devoted to a discussion of War and Peace", --an unfortunate phrase for such an announcement since it leaves one wondering if Tolstoy's novel of War and Peace is meant or if a flock of books about War and about Peace may be on the docket. I should like to hear Miss Freemantle have a go at anything but especially about the Tolstoy novel.

This memo will reach little Miss Lee during the week of natal festivities and I hold the thought they may be so wonderfully pleasant.....



10428

10428

From Daisey in the Dell's letter the other day, I got the impression she was descending on Natchitoches on Wednesday, the 23rd, and that she would be stopping at the Louisianne which I had recommended to her a year or so ago. I believe I am correct about her expressed intentions but it seems to me that on previous occasions, she changed her plans or somehow got tangled up with other people that her plans didn't pan out in accordance with her written pre-arrival intentions. Be that as it may I telephoned the Louisianne to inquire if she had arrived and at 9 o'clock she had not and there was but one room vacant and, as she had made no reservation, it was to be hoped she arrived soon, that is to day, before someone else occupied the only remaining chamber.

I am under the impression that D. D. Garber is always traveling with someone on whom she is dependent for transportation, certainly a vital necessity in the present hejira she is making back and forth to Fort Jessup from town. But it seems to me that almost everyone I know who leans on others for transportation ends up by getting their schedule in a mix-up and thr wing the hosts into confusion by failures to appear or disappear at pre-arranged times --and sometimes even days.

My secretarial assistance wasn't much today and so I read only one or two letters and let the enclosures and the hand written stuff go until the morrow. You may judge the quality of my assistance when I report that in a letter from James, there was some reference to Fort Jessup, rendered casually enough by the reader as Fort Jesus, Chile.

I was glad to learn from Zelma today that Doreatha is getting along nicely at the Shreveport Charity hospital, following her Monday tumor operation, and expects to be discharged this week end. Andy's brother, who had a hernia operation recently is back home and doing alright while Mr. Earnest, the former overseer, left today for Shreveport to have an operation for hernia. I believe he is 78 and so may recuperate a little more slowly than Andy's brother.

I hold the thought a measure of our fine weather may be making itself felt in Lyme and that the blessing ray continue throughout the impending festive fortnight.....

10429

10429

Thurs day, March 24th, 1960.

A lovely Spring day, moderately warm and sunny until 4 when a few sprinkles descended until 7.

Daisey in the Dell Phoned mid morning. I invited her and her mother down for 7 o'clock. She had already been to Fort Jessup. When the clouds rolled up around 4 and gave no hint of going away, I concluded it might be dark by 7, what with the sun setting at 6:30, and so I called the lady at 6:10, suggesting they come sooner. She said they could leave immediately and thought she could make the 15 in about 15 or 20 minutes. I said I would meet her at the front gate at 6:35 and with what little twilight there would be, they could get some notion of the appearance of the Ghana house, at least its roof outline, etc.. They got lost en route and arrived at twenty minutes before 8 in pitch dark.

Her mama didn't want to venture out to see Ghana but Daisey did and liked it

Daisey wanted to know what I thought of Jessup. I told her I thought that except for the kitchen, it was a fraud. She said she had felt the same way, that Henry Clay Watson felt the same way, too, and said he was returning to resume whatever post he holds in New Orleans. Having built the enormous building on the place, the State is apparently not going to put a curator in charge. Daisey said she had been to the Mansfield battle ground and museum and once, by sheer chance, she was able to tract down somebody who had a key. It seems the museum is a pretty building which is kept locked because the State, after making the place and park and erecting the museum, provides no custodian and so visitors cannot see anything except a field after they journey to the place to see it. I guess I had better take this up with Mrs. Hodges, among other people, who are beating the drum for tourists to come to see something that isn't being shown. It's all so typically Long that once shouldn't be surprised but somehow I am.



ESPOT

10430

Mid morning Long Distance called, not stating whence the call was originating. After five minutes a voice got on the air, not announcing its identity but I recognized --of all people --Ethel Holloman. Naturally, she wanted something, --some Houston people in Alexandria wanting to visit Melroe. I suggested tomorrow morning at 9. She said she was coming up some Sunday to take some pictures. I told her that would be fine.

I know not if the Enterprise reaches you about the same time a letter does if mailed on the same day and so I am enclosing this week's Cane River Memo as it reviews the book about to reach your true hand. It contains nothing of value as a review and the Thomas Gilcrease reference at the beginning is merely to catch the interest of local readers. I have a feeling that you will agree with me that the prize chapters are on Mrs. Potter Palmer, Mrs. Jack Gardner and Gertrude Stein although some of the others have paragraphs of interest, including that of J. P. Morgan, Mrs. Henry Havemayer and her daughter Electra. The next time I'm in Vermont, I want to see the Electra H. Webb village which should have had more publicity, I should think, than it has. I do hope that if you haven't wandered around the Mrs. Jack Gardner estate you will make it a point to do so the next time you find yourself in "bean town".

One thing about the Saarinen book is that the mere mention of names stirs one to impatient to travel down a dozen different avenues at the same time in pursuit of biographical material about one or another of the people mentioned. The case of the Countess Speranska-Princess Cantacuzene. Vaguely, it seems to me, she did a book of memories but somehow I never saw it in print although it must have been published. I always loved the lady whose personality still entrances me every time I remember my pleasant associations with her. I have always wondered why she used both titles, as she always did, although, I seem to recall that her children merely used the Cantacuzene part. I am wondering if the Speranska came forward as something to be cultivated because in the 1870's and 1880's and perhaps even later, people were still avidly reading Tolstoy's novels and Count Speranski may have been quite familiar as a character to the public generally.

I'm going to be comparatively alone this week on the plantation, it appears. Tomorrow Celeste goes into her annual retreat down Alexandria way and J. H. flies to the Mexican west coast for a vacation or some such.....

ESPOT

10431

Friday, March 25th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy with an East wind keeping the temperature down to the mid 40's. The promise is for rain tonight and partly cloudy and mild weather on the morrow.

It was a typical Ethel Holloman deal I ran into this morning when the lady from Houston about whom Ethel 'phoned yesterday arrived. She was late, of course, and with the six Alexandria ladies and two small children, arriving by two cars, constituted something much more than what I had supposed I had bargained.

One lady was interested, the others were incapable of much interest and the kids raised such hell that nobody could get much out of the tour. I, however, could shorten it appreciably which I did.

I didn't see Celeste today as she was in the big road early and this afternoon was in retreat where she will remain for a few days. I saw J. H. at supper, however, and he remarked that Sister phoned last night and that the Wenk household seems to be in just as much of a jangle as ever which is certainly saying quite a lot.

About 8:30 tonight somebody tapped on my door. It was Joe Henry, wondering where J. H. and Celeste might be. I could state where Celeste might be but, of course, had no notion as to where J. H. might be passing his evening before heading for Mexico on the morrow.

Joe said he had come down from Arkansas and Juanita A. had driven over from Comroe, Texas. Their thought was to surprise everyone. They seem to have surprised nobody but themselves. In this world in which we move, one would have supposed the day of surprises were long since passed, so far as bobbing up announced for week ends. I suppose during the past several years not many people have surprised the Joe Henrys for week end visits and, for all I know, they may never have imagined other people might have plans that do not include the surprise week end visits in the cards.



18401

10432

A call from The Enterprise this morning acknowledged receipt of C. R. M. for next Thursday. It will be entitled "Chunking a Natchitoches Legend". It is less andx answer than a counter statement about Uncle Tom as have been appearing in the Shreveport Times editorial and Lettes to the Editor of late. The Enterprise suggested it might be an excellent idea to send this coming Thursday's column to Don Ewing who probably wrote the Shreveport Times editorial and to each of the people whose letters commended the paper on its position, including W.W. Wells, Carrie and so on. There's nothing exception about my piece but it will suffice to set tongues wagging some more on Uncle Tom which is exactly what I want.

I was rather sleepy last night when jotting down the memo and I may accordingly repeat myself a little but I hope you will not mind. In talking about "Fort Jesus" and other State institutions last night, Daisy in the Dell remarked that twice of late she has passed by the Mansfield State Park to find it locked and without caretaker... My impulse is to write a column on State museums that are not open to the public whose tax money has built them. But, before taking pen in hand, I think I shall explore the matter a little further before sounding off. After all, Clara Long Knott did get behind the D. A. R. to petition the Legislature to get a bill passed for her brother to sign into law, creating the Jessup thing. What with most D. A. R. ladies I know having nothing to do and all day to do it, it might not be a bad idea to write less about the State failing to supply a custodian than to suggest that the D. A. R. ladies, having seen their initial efforts crowned with success, constitute themselves as a committee from whose numbers ladies might be assigned to man the posts, what with the State having failed to do so. Of course this would be a very bad solution of anything worth while as a museum but, except for the little old kitchen, the big Fort Jessup thing is of mighty dubious value anyway, except in the money expended on its construction, and so almost anybody might do to keep the place open during daylight hours. Like Mr. Ho ges, the D. A. R.'s seem to be forever concerned about calling a meeting to decide on when the next meeting should be held-- a policy which seems to be excellent for taking up a lot of time to accomplish nothing and, as the ladies and Mr. Hodges both seem to adore such meetings, it might jolt them a little to receive a suggestion that they actually do something. But of this point and others, I shall do a little more thinking before setting the suggestion down in column form.

And my festivities be gay in Lyme when this reaches the true hand of little Miss Lee.....

. 10433

Felicitations

by Ged, Feyer, Quatorze, Saarinen  
and Lestan.....

3/30/60



10434

10434

Sunday, March 27th, 1960.

Cloudy but mild with only a dab of rain during Saturday night.

Long ago, this you will have noticed the new ribbon. I got Juanita A. to put it on more than Juanita A., although both A. and B. were over this way of Saturday afternoon.

I opened the metal box and I suppose for the first time in years, actually had a new ribbon in my hand, and I noticed something I hadn't known before, representing a new fashion in new ribbons, apparently, that is, new to me. I recall, in the old days, a new ribbon filled in all the space between the center on which it is wound to the rim of the spool, but for the first time in recent years, I notice that this type of ribbon occupies only about half the space between the outer circumference of the spool and the center, in the middle of the gadget on which the ribbon is anchored. I mention this to demonstrate how far behind I am in knowing about new and shorter ribbons which may have been in vogue for years and years without me knowing about the new and shorter material.

Be that as it may, I am naturally delighted to have things adjusted once more so that I can get on with machine which works so much more easily than the other one I have. The lady called me this morning, saying she and John would like me to break bread with them and their guests, the Andreassens, that was from Baton Rouge when James mentioned a few months ago, and after dinner, we would all drive over to the Fort Jessup festivities. I told the hostess she had better bring her husband and guests down here for an early morning go-round but that I would have to take a rain check on dinner and Fort Jessup and so they all came down and the first thing Mr. Andreassen said on meeting me that Irma Tucker had mentioned to him yesterday she had just had a new companion and said, "Oh, Irma Tucker....oh, yes... and that died right there."



10435

10435

John brought me a bottle of "Moragan Beatty" wine which is ple

of taste and without much alcohol and Thelma had a cake and a  
quart of ice cream, all of which I thought quite  
nice. We sampled the wine forthwith but I saved  
the balance for my own delectation, as I am comparatively alone  
on the plantation, what with Joe and Juanita A. having gone to town

Saturday afternoon I was mildly taken aback when, in  
responding to a letter, I encountered, -- of all people, --  
Blythe Bandy, Jean Frantz and La Johnson. Blythe brought me  
some fancy crackers, Juan Frantz and some elegant sandwiches  
and Jean some fancy crackers and cake and La Johnson a  
straw hat, hand made, and it was all quite gay. Blythe  
and I were quite in the pink of condition and we had  
a nice visit. I did a little reading last night from Bruce  
Cattens: This Hallowed Ground or some such title. Because  
I was fairly sleepy I soon dozed off and was sleeping  
through most of the paragraph and I didn't want to  
miss anything and so I shall begin again tonight and  
feel certain I am going to enjoy what I skipped over  
last night. I did not go to bed until 11:30 and I  
had seen Celeste about 10:30 when she returned from her  
retreat, pausing at the house long enough to get some  
fresh clothes and head to bed again for the night where  
she will be sleeping at the hospital with her mama until J. H.  
returns from Mexico.

My friend Johnson brought me a copy of The Forestry  
magazine or some such and I believe she said there was a  
good article in it. I suppose this is something I  
knocked off so far back I have forgotten what it is and  
I know not if there are pictures as I haven't had anybody to ask  
through it with me and so I don't know if it is of the slightest  
interest or not. I shall read it, I suppose, when I have time.  
The cowboy, Joe Wilson, who transacted the selling  
of cattle last summer in autumn, confessed just before  
going to jail, and got six years for stealing. Had he confessed  
when George and Peter did he would have been better off as it  
is said he had to pay his lawyer and his property for legal  
advice that ended up with the confession. Peter and George  
had been brought to Watchtowers to testify and Zelma went to town  
to see them. She said they looked fine and like it so much at  
Watchtowers they are not anxious to get out of there when their  
turn come up.

10436

10436

Monday, March 28th, 1960.

Memorandum: I have had a flock of cuttings from a prize persimmon in my ice box for  
several weeks. I must round up an odd assortment of wood and stuff  
and get busy doing a job of grafting of these on some old trees  
and two or three of the young persimmons set out at Chana's.

Mrs. Walker called me this morning to say that she had  
just learned from the bank that this day an old house down  
Bermuda way was being sold. She didn't know where it was  
situated but would find out and let me know. The name of the  
purchaser is a Mrs. Richardson. I asked her if the name  
of the person selling the property would be Jones and she  
said she believed it to be so. I shall try to find out more.

Later evidence confirmed this Jones business and that  
is to say it is the old, old house appearing on the Joyous Coast  
plate, giving the name as Reform Plantation and the builder  
as Francis Rehta, papa of Oryta Rehta who married Joe Henry,  
father of Joe Sam and J. H. Henry, the latter the husband of  
the late Connie Henry. This is the house, of course, where Cousin Josephine Grunwald, nee Fla  
was born and this is the place that has the two huge  
cisterns which, I believe, are the largest in the parish.  
Mrs. Walker called me back later. She confirmed the name  
of the purchaser and says Mrs. Richardson hasn't any money but  
lots of enthusiasm and is prepared to put 10 or 15 thousand dollars  
into saving the place. It is the enthusiasm and the ability to  
spend enough to save the place that is important, of course, and  
thus the old place is given the promise of a new lease on life.  
I shall immediately set things in motion so that we can  
have a group, and especially the Hysteric Ladies,  
may offer to lend a hand in odd and ends and shall recommend that  
the place be put in Pilgrimage this year if possible, with  
a year for sure, and I have already written the owner I shall  
be glad to contribute what I know from family accounts, of the  
former layout where the various buildings were situated,  
how the planting was carried out and a couple of the original colonettes  
which I saved when the original gallery was removed and a new one substituted.



10438

10437

0801, 4788 4701, 400000

I coffee-ed across the fence this morning and was not surprised to find mine hostess in the seven heaven of delight, --the aftermath of her week end retreat. I understood the chief spiritual adviser was a darling, stemming from Massachusetts. Among other things he had reported to me that the Divine Wisdom in having created people in different colors. The Catholic Church had better watch out for the Citizens Council will be clapping that body into the same category as the Communists, since everyone who disagrees with their bigotry is automatically transported into a Kremlin cell.

Brother's grandma, who was a slave, told me that she had seen him in the prison section. On Saturday some older resident of that place was raped, robbed and murdered by her 25 year old grandson, one of the boys who were known to have lots of Joe's. Both mulatto and white and the present one is white. The murdered lady was discovered until Sunday and her grandson was immediately picked up in Tyler, Texas, and he helpfully admitted he had done the raping, robbing and murdering.

The artist called me late last night. She said that her grandson, Brother, was in jail in Shreveport. He asked a man in a honkytonk for a light and the man had pulled a knife on him and so Brother had shot him with a gun. He had borrowed from one of his acquaintances. Brother is King's boy who was my pupil one year when he was unable to walk and then 5 months later because of his weakened condition, following illness resulting from ever eating Paris green. Brother never did grow much and although he is now about 21, he still looks like a 10 year old. The artist reported that Brother's grandma, Mary Miller, had been to seek him in the jail and Brother had said he would not shoot the man because he didn't want him to cut his guts out. It would appear Brother must have been well liked and very young to have been in the jail. He was cutting on him since he had provided himself with a gun in advance. The artist, just before learning of Brother's adventure, had heard on the radio about the Cloutierville grandma that had volunteered the information that she wasn't ever going to let anyone of her grandson's stay with her. I laughed at her on this point, telling her that she knew perfectly well she was afraid of the hope potentials but simply wanted her to be a doctor when Pa decided to make a round. She heaved and held her breath at that one and was hung up in fits of giggles.

10438

10438

Tuesday, March 29th, 1960.

Memorandum: This is a record of the conversation between me and the friends of Miss Kate, called me from their home in town this morning. They had some guests from Great River, Long Island, whom they wanted to bring down this afternoon and down they came and life was sort of dull during most of the visit. The four girls all went to Pratt Institute 40 years ago and they were having a little anniversary get together this week end. One of the ladies had something to tell I thought quite gay. Except for once, she had never been in a plane before until she flew down here from New York yesterday. The one exception happened just 50 years ago when, as a young girl, her papa permitted to make a 28 mile flight with Glenn Curtis who was barnstorming around somewhere in the New York area in 1910, and not until 1960 did the gal ever venture inside a plane.

According to my calendar, it's the 100th birthday. Not having the slightest notion as to where she might be, but wanting to send her some flowers, I sent her some flowers, addressed them to the Advertising Mart of Shreveport, thinking that if she didn't chance to be there, the people in the office might enjoy them.

Half an hour later, Mrs. Hyde of the Louisianne motel phoned me, saying a flock of women were scheduled to visit Hedges Gardens and Mr. Byrd had phoned him to ask if the ladies might be engineered over to Melrose. Hey night not.

But I was glad to talk with Mr. Hyde for a moment and he asked me if I had attended the Jessup on Sunday at the hotel. Before we had finished, he asked me if I had seen Carolyn last night or this morning. I said I had not. He said she had been an overnight guest at the Louisianne, having come in from Shreveport and was going to New Orleans today and that she was planning to fly to Peru within a day or two. That must be a mistake. She had reference to in her letter and no one knew of it.

So I was glad I had sent the flowers to the Advertising Mart so that the girls there might enjoy them.



10439

8E401

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Ora called this morning to say she had encountered a  
lot more material having to do with her diary and asking  
if she might consult with me on Wednesday afternoon regarding  
piecing some of it together. It is the only day this  
week I shall have no slave to tend me and but Ora's work  
is more important than anything the slave and I might be doing.

Cora Maude Hicks also called this morning to say  
at fleet of sun were coming down for around at Hatchitoches  
on Thursday afternoon and night she bring them down here for a tour  
I had seen Celeste around all of the week just down from town, and  
she mentioned the possibility that she might be home on  
Thursday afternoon and said O.K. to the nuns, knowing  
Celeste is wild about them and will be delighted to have  
them for coffee. I shall be glad to see her.  
While the Haupt and party were here this afternoon, Dr. Talley  
blew in from New Orleans and I was always glad to see her  
and she was delighted there was somebody to lend me a hand  
in managing the sweet girl graduates of Pratt.

And speaking of Pratt, there was a letter from the "Richard  
Pattis in today's post, having something to do about  
Nicholas Biddle. I shall see about it here with or later  
in the week. So when I see him I shall tell  
him that. Last night, I found myself wondering how Helen might  
be feeling and if it was a bout time she had completed  
her globe-encircling act and accordingly I knocked  
off a note to her at Waco. Vaguely, it seems to me  
she planned to get back about the middle of March and  
certainly should like to have a note from her as to how  
she made out. I shall be glad to hear from her.  
Carmichael called me this morning from home. She said she  
was going to her office for an hour this afternoon but  
she was so tired she could not go. I shall be glad to hear from her.  
I next week in Saturday she started for the office in mid afternoon  
and finally made it but on leaving her house she caught her Spanish  
spike heel on her sidewalk and fell down, scratching up her  
face considerably but in doing so she did no damage to her  
except her pride. She has not learned yet that on crowding  
her, she might do well to knock off an inch or two from her  
fancy high heels.

I couldn't get any weather reports out of Lym tonight but  
I am holding the thought the morning may be the prettiest day

10440

11401

Wednesday, March 30th, 1960.

Memorandum  
Anyway you look at it, today has been so lovely in  
this part of the world and I held the thought that in  
many ways it may have been equal to Lym. I was so  
in spite of much cannonading last night to the North,  
the stars overhead were never blotted out and not a drop  
fell in the direction of the greatest racket.  
In spite of much cannonading last night to the North,  
the stars overhead were never blotted out and not a drop  
fell in the direction of the greatest racket.  
I was so happy this morning on awakening before sunup to  
see how heavenly blue was the sky and a nice breeze rose with the  
sun and kept the gerds rattling on the front gallery all day long  
while tonight the breeze has gone to rest with the sun and the  
moon is radiant over the quiet, perfumed gardens that look  
so pretty at this past sunset hour.  
Naturally, all day my thoughts have been "hovering" over  
Lym and all day I have been holding the thought a measure  
of happiness was bubbling all over the place and I  
There were lots of telephone and too many people today but  
all of them were pleasant and so although pleasantly tired,  
I can well imagine that little Miss Lee may well be, too,  
but withal as contented as Leston. I hope.  
A call from town this morning announced that some  
people from General Motors were hoping to get some  
pictures. In the past, I might have discouraged them but  
what with movie making being so much to the fore at the moment,  
I assumed it would be just as well to let the magazines have  
their go at things, too, and as I gave the people-people  
quite a lot of time I guess they arrived about 10 and it  
was nearly 3 before they departed and I think they got some good  
shots. Everything in color.  
As they drove away, some friends of Frances Jack arrived and  
they had a couple of ladies from England with them and that was very  
pleasant. I shall be glad to hear from them.



04401

10441

Wednesday, March 30th, 1960

pleasant, too. I was trying to wedge in a little work both inside and outside Yucca and I got a few things accomplished though not as much, had I been able to "inspire" my helpers.

At 11:00 I nearly broke my neck, racing to telephone calls that were of no moment but things went that way up until supper time. And just as I responded to the supper bell, I encountered Louise Millsbaugh who had come to make a little round. She remained until 6:30, after which I brought home the plate Zelma had fixed for me and so much of a little as I talked with Mrs. Richardson, new owner of the old Redatur place. We made an appointment for tomorrow night at 6 when she will drive me up to look over her property and when I shall give her some concept of how the place looked in the old days. She seems enchanted at the prospect of seeing such a glimpse and, naturally, I am delighted to do whatever I can to lend a hand. Probably afterward, by moonlight, I shall give her a glimpse of Melrose, a place she has never visited and so it would appear tomorrow night will be busy, too. Mrs. Richardson who owns a home in Florida has a husband in Japan. They have lived in Germany and France, Army, I suppose. They have two boys, both 13, one being their own son, the other an adopted boy of the same age. When riding along Canal River and catching sight of Reform plantation, she fell in love with it, got particulars and immediately phoned her husband in Japan who told her not to let it get away from her. Well, we ought to more (know more) about all this on the morrow.

Tonight's invitation to Learning dwelt on the story of Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, a novel I never warmed up to. The panel seemed to agree the story, over-stuffed with coincidences, was not so much the actual world as the private creation of a Hugo-made universe. Somebody threw in the line that Goodness and Stupidity were natural companions, a statement open for debate. I should think the romanticism of the 1830's had waned when *Les Misérables* appeared in 1862 but it was agreed the book was a success when it appeared and has continued popular. As it was never popular with me, I cannot say much on this point. It was said the coincidences were too improbable (improbable) but I seem to remember other sets in real life equally so, and the number of candlesticks I have known to have been stolen by hapless people from their benefactors would fill whole cathedrals but more of Hugo at another sit

For tonight, only this wish is in my heart, --that it has

04401

10442

Thursday, March 31st, 1960  
A lovely summer's day, cloudless and warm, and rather breezy in the afternoon. The hour now being a half after midnight.

This morning before breakfast, Fugbeu, who was sent to labor in my vineyard, secured the services of Beau Mack who was operating a tractor to which was attached just the right plough and ready for planting.

I went to the store to get the seeds I had ordered in February and was surprised and annoyed when the clerk said the seed salesman had been in lately and he had not secured the seeds. He thinks gardening foolish and isn't very cooperative in such matters.

I met Fugbeu and Mitchell to do some other things but Mitchell was tired and Fugbeu was a little on the high side. Several times I had to help Fugbeu find his saw, his axe, his hoe, his blippers, his jack which I am not much good even when looking for my own things.

I had the Thursday people all morning and at 12:30, Celeste wanted me to give a tour for a girl friend of hers who had spent the night with her, an aunt of Bobby's. I did this and then I did the latter telling me what a wonderful time Bobby is having exploring the Melrose scrapbooks at the college which are supposed to be classified and obviously aren't and the originals were not to be in the hands of anyone, only the microfilm and the film haven't been made. I pushed a lot of stuff helter-skelter into my room to get it out of the way, giggling to myself about how Hope Haupt would have loved yesterday when exploring a bachelor's bathroom, had she fallen into such a mountain of trash. I am so glad to be out of it.



10443

10443

At 1:30, Cousin Cera Maude Hicks and Carmen's sister, serving as pilots, arrived with a couple of nuns and a bevy of near nuns for a tour. It was quite unsatisfactory from my point of view as the party simply would not stick together. We would do the library, for example, and one of the nuns and a couple of other bags would remain there as the party progressed. It continued thus throughout the tour. The two or three bags certainly never heard anything about what they were seeing as they made the slow progression, always a house two behind. I was glad when I got them out of Judea and on the way to their cars. Carmen's sister asked me for a folder about Clementine and returned from the avant-cour and dashed into my bedroom to get one from the armoire and was astonished to discover a nun enthroned therein. Shades of Hope Haupt, and only 24 hours apart.

At three o'clock, Cera came as they were leaving, and advised her on several literary points. She read me a letter that had reached her today. It was dated March 14th and was posted from Marshall on Tuesday night apparently. Carolyn asked her if she wouldn't like to do research for pictures and the introductory section of a photographic book for which Hastings House had asked her 18 months ago. I advised against doing anything on such a book until all the photographs were to hand, advising Carolyn of her idea on this point, and that, of course, means never. At 11:00, J. H. Haupt, who had been in the south Texas, left just before supper and there was glad to find J. H. back from Mexico. He said he had had a good time and that cotton was weeks behind there and in south Texas. At 11:00, the new owner of the Red Lion place, arrived a little before 6 with her 13 year old son, and I knew not if it was the adopted one or the other, and we journeyed uplander. A new roof is being put on and new flooring is being laid on the upper gallery. I pointed out places where things had been in the ante bellum period, gave her the names of some of the rooms, etc. and when they brought me home at first dark, gave them a Melrose tour, followed by quite a long sitting. I like the woman, because I think she has trail qualities and because she loves the old house. I doubt if her cultural range is great but her enthusiasm and good sense is worth ten times more than finishing school tomfoolery. I shall back her in many ways and shall call Theinman in the morning to write her a letter, as President of the Hysterical ladies, congratulating on her purchase and invite her to join the association which means Reform plantation will thus be made ready for Pilgrimage material before long and Mrs. Richardson's enthusiasm suggested a trip to tour standards. So runs out today's hourglass. Tomorrow will be busy, too, with the Walkers bringing Pennsylvania friends, just from Mexico, etc. Being too tired for sleep as yet, I shall read a little and then fold.....

10444

10444

Friday, April 1st, 1960.

Postmaster Summerfield's boys sometimes get around with such speed, and today was a case in point when, to my surprise and delight, came to hand a grand letter from Lynne, dated 3.31.60. A so home, what an idea to get the letter the other day had been, and I was so surprised it could have made the journey in the short space of time it did. Wednesday evening to Friday morning, a hell with a nice fat moon to boot. Cloudy and sprinkly most of the day, tonight as clear as a bell with a nice fat moon to boot.

I'm happy to know that little Miss Lee liked the things in the Easter basket. About a month ago, at the conclusion of a memo, I mentioned that I was delighted with a book I was reading but thought there was something wrong with the title. Then it occurred to me that little Miss Lee might like the volume as an anniversary number and so I chunked the memo and re-wrote it, omitting the reference to The Proud Possessors, and, when done, ordered a copy from the publishers. What seems to have characterized so many of the great collectors appearing in this book is the fact that they seemed impelled to gather together things of beauty, not so much to possess them selfishly but rather to convey these treasures to society generally so that possession seemed less dominant than a desire to assemble such treasures and pass them along so that people generally might enjoy them. In short, it seemed to boil down eventually to the public being the proud possessors and the great collectors often playing out the role of public servant. I cannot consider William Randolph Hearst as in any way acting on behalf of the public as he gathered his tens of masterpieces together but surely people like Alarcos and many others must have been motivated by aspirations that encompassed people and times far beyond their own immediate selves. Often I wonder if there has ever been a 75 year period.....



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in any country and in any age that has equalled the United States in the number of people of wealth and of modest means who contributed so much in the field of Art,-- as private citizens, as somehow emerged in this country between the 1880's and the 1950's or 1960's. Perhaps most important among these personalities were people like the Steins, Mary Cassatt, or however she spelled her name,-- people of influence because of a variety of circumstances in which wealth was not the dominant element

and even didn't have any more,-- often for, for less than plenty of people we know, such as A. J. Hedges, latter and so on,-- and yet unlike the latter, the former had one drop of something or other that made them people of consequence and, I suspect, people of vast joy, than many with ample means who don't seem to be making any particular contribution to the enrichment of cultural joy of the public generally.

In spite of today's sprinkles, the power lawn mowers were going all day, the grass having jumped half way to one's knees during the past few days. I should have mowed it last night.

Mrs. Walker brought her Pennsylvania guests this afternoon and we had a very pleasant hour. They left in the morning,-- the Walkers and guests, for Baton Rouge to attend the Gridiron dinner there Saturday night. They guests will proceed home from there and Mrs. Walker will enter the Hatchitchee hospital on Monday to undergo tests.

Joe has another cold that affects his voice so that one can scarcely understand him. Celeste, as of this morning, seemed happy enough, being vastly concerned with social potentials for the week end.

The weather Bureau predicts fine weather for Saturday and Sunday and that means lots of road runners,-- friends of friends of friends,-- will be milling around. I should like to read a little from this Hallowed Ground by Bruce Catten for I find the book an excellent survey of the 1861-1865 conflict. Catten has personalized many of the dominant personalities of the period in such a way that one finds it easy to keep them straight in one's mind,-- and there were so many generals of varying abilities that without a Catten brushstroke, tend to fade into anonymous places and so blurred and then lost in one's concepts of the period.....

74401

10446

Sunday, April 3rd, 1960.

Memorandum: I should have mowed it last night. Cloudy yesterday and today. It rained a quarter of an inch last night. Tonight the sky is cloudless and the moon is just grand. Just behind me, I should have mowed it last night. Except for local citizens, I saw nobody over the week end and, was glad of the measure of leisure resulting. Come to think of it, I guess I did see one or two people but in the wake of all the doings of the past week, two or three people from the outside world seem insignificant to the point of nothingness. I shall be curious to know how the past week panned out in the Lyne neighborhood. It is bound to have been busy and, if memory serves, there are other anniversaries to be observed along about this season of the year so that busy times must be all over the place. I find myself wondering, too, how the father and son business turns and what decision will be made there and I hold the thought that it may be in the direction of more peace and an opportunity for solitude. I finished Catten's Hallowed Ground last night and liked it all. It's a comprehensive account of the Civil War operations and I have read Catten has a way of giving the endless military commanders just the right adjective or phrase to make it possible for the reader to precede each personality with a characteristic quality that saves them from being lost in the crowd and a less relief of individuality which often produces little short of a blur in many accounts of the endless doings in many of these accounts that conflict in one's mind. With all the racket going on in Marshall, Baton Rouge and other places where the color thing seems to be stirring, the lines in the Catten book seem to be so parallel to the situation of today that I am glad to hear on the radio of the picketing of the W. Woolworth stores this past Saturday. It seems so impossible that one American can get into a five and dime store and get a cup of coffee and another American citizen cannot.



10447

10447

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After all the world went through between 1838 and 1845 in matters concerning racial points, it would seem as though lots of people learned nothing, leading one to suspect that ignorance and prejudice will go on forever. Surely it was a disaster that Lincoln's services were abruptly terminated just at the beginning of his second term but the loss was the nation's loss from that day to this, but what a lot of heartache sudden death saved Lincoln from experiencing. In view of all the scuffling going on around this country, it does seem vaguely odd that this country should, in the United Nations, be voting with the majority to urge South Africa to be a little more humane. But it must be a source of satisfaction to all of us that while hill billys are still making strange noises, at least the official Washington circles are endorsing a policy of treating human beings like human beings. I don't recall if I mentioned it or not and so I shall run the risk of repeating myself. One night last week, perhaps Thursday, several fire crosses were burned on the lawns of several people in town. One cross was burned in front of the home of a doctor of color while the crosses were burned in front of the J. H. Williams home. Every body around the local supper table were laughing about this strange episode. Obviously the crosses in front of the doctor of color were burned simply because the doctor is a negro. That puzzles me because who knew J. H. Williams, however, is a puzzle. He should draw double the amount of crosses, especially as he is white and quite unpopular with people of color. Anyone trying to figure out the hill billy type of mind would have quite a chore on his hands but somehow the thing seems to take on a somewhat hilarious aspect when the hill billy signed a lump sum of \$1000 to the colored people. It is almost as though a Republican burned a cross in Senator Kennedy's front door and then in Vice President Nixon's. I find myself a bit hungry and so I think I shall trot out the Dutch oven and set something to baking while getting busy and knock off a column or two.

10448

10448

Monday, April 4th, 1960.

Memorandum: I was quite surprised and withal delighted to discover a letter from Lyme, as of Friday, in today's post. It was a thoughtful little Miss Lee to give me a glimpse of things as they went and such a complete outline of Library of Congress recommendations. I am especially delighted the Henry Adams item was included. The Middle Years must be good and I shall be altogether enchanted if, by some slip, the book gets put on the way. I have been thinking so much about the Washington and often scenes in H. Adams' life. I suppose the Middle Years were primarily Boston, a place that could supply such a lovely assortment of places for one to visit and absorb on a leisurely holiday. I like to think of such things over and over again. Boston with a companion would be so pleasant. I know not why but sometimes I envision such visits as likely to take place either in the spring or autumn. It would be so pleasant reading the Education and visiting such places as Braintree and Quincy, the several different houses associated with the family, etc., etc. And it would be so pleasant absorbing Fenway Court with unbounded leisure. It seems such a pity that people like Kay and James with all the income from such pilgrimages never seem to think about such things. Perhaps they are getting the maximum of what they want, --I hope, --but doubt. In the mean time, it's ever so pleasant to read about such sojourns and to feel twice blessed for having a companion with whom one can share the possibilities of such future delights. I shall be boring you with particular details of the balance of this season. I ran across a flock of young about geese, I suppose for today. I ran across a flock of young plants that had sprung from seeds, self sown last autumn. They are out of the ground an inch and a half and I shall not plant them. I shall not plant them.



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10449

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of the standard types for another 10 days or two weeks. I have never understood how it is that self sown grounds come up so far in advance of the planted ones and never seem to suffer from the cold the way the planted ones do. Perhaps they become immune to atmospheric conditions because of the hardihood they develop as a result of their struggle with the cold when they come up prematurely under their own steam.

The Shreveport Times of yesterday carried a picture of Whit and Frances ask which I shall enclose. Don't bother to save it. I simply wanted you to see what Blythe's daughter looks like

Although I haven't seen a movie in years, I am, nevertheless, looking forward to hearing tonight's broadcast from Hollywood when the Oscar award meeting gets under way. I seem to enjoy these performances even though unacquainted with the people and pictures mentioned. I heard CBS and NBC news casts tonight and was impressed that neither network mentioned tonight's movie deings. Perhaps ABC is going to do the broadcasting. I hope that as it may, I shall probably have no difficulty stumbling onto the proper network along about 8:30 which, come to think of it, seems to make the deings pretty late for people living in the Standard Time belt.

Mr. Grew whom I have twice addressed as Mr. Byrd, came this way from up in hill-billy country above Hatchitoches, arriving before breakfast and remaining until after supper. He had in mind grafting some pecaness but found the season so late that it turned out he was premature in his arrival. He hit it just right for the persimmons; it seemed to me and he lent me a hand this afternoon to mummify and put away the persimmons.

Carmen called me this afternoon but didn't have much of interest to relate. She isn't fully recuperated as yet but felt well enough to go to a bridge game in Many on Saturday where she saw Clara Leng Kn who claimed she held the key to Fort Jessup and that nobody could get without receiving her permission. For a State park to be managed in such a fashion only the Leng regime could produce anything quite so silly. What with Uncle Earl stepping down next month, however, perhaps Clara had better do most of her big warbling now while she is still able to act like the sister of a dictator. Well, Lord, we exchange a clown for a greener in May so the choice isn't much

10450

10450

Tuesday, March 5th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A lovely sunny day, a beautiful moon-drenched night. I am beginning to pay attention to the reports of the flood situation on the Mississippi and Missouri above St. Louis. They hold the promise of damp feet in this area, not from their own content but rather because the Mississippi, when it reaches abnormal height, makes it impossible for Red River to drain into it and thus Red begins backing up and the Red River valley gets a ducking. The flood gates above New Orleans, built into the Mississippi at a cost of hundreds of millions, have never been opened to let the excess Mississippi River water spill over into the Gulf. This is because hill-billy stock raisers use the land where the water would flow for free pasture and the politicians down that way seem more frightened about hill-billy opposition to draining off excess water that would force them to put their cattle on their own pastures than are they influenced by farmers up this way. In my opinion, these flood gates should be opened within the next few days to drain off Mississippi water in advance of the arrival of the river's crest and thus provide more space for the advancing wall of water to escape so that Red and its tributaries might continue functioning normally instead of putting the land in this area under water. I hear no talk of such a possibility, however, and it seems to me that since the flood gates have never been opened, everybody takes it as a matter of course now that they will forever remain closed.

It's interesting that Red River basin can go without getting a drop of rain water during the ensuing months and still get a tremendous flood simply by the Mississippi rising to prevent the Red from flowing into it. One of the uncalculated losses citizens of Louisiana sustain from



10451

10451

Wednesday, April 6th, 1960.

stupid State Government is to be found simply in the refusal  
on the part of the Governor to open the vast spillway  
gates. It seems so strange that people of influence,--  
assuming anyone has any influence with atonRouge, ever puts  
pressure on the Executive to anticipate floods now in the making  
and thus avoid them.

I saw Juanita B. today when she came down this morning to  
get a heap of flowers and things for three arrangements  
she is making on the morrow for a flower show at the old  
Lemee house on the morrow. She seemed as gay as usual and  
bubbling over with enthusiasm which is as it should be.  
She asked me most particularly to phone her any time I want to  
do any business in town and that she will be glad to  
pick me up, keep me for dinner and deliver me back home  
whenever I wish. She appears to be one of those rare souls who  
is always the same and the sameness is forever on the pleasant side.  
I had luck last night in the matter of the Hollywood oscar award  
as I fell asleep before the endless business started and woke up  
around 8 o'clock when it was over but some enterprising station,  
or perhaps the station was merely charitable, had edited the  
doings and was re-broadcasting same, giving only the main  
points of interest, such as the best picture, the best  
actor and actress, best supporting actors and actresses and so on.  
I must say it was a pleasure of have a lot of the technical  
stuff in which I am not interested eliminated.

Tonight I shall be listening to an 11:15 special program giving  
returns in the Wisconsin primary. In a way, I should be satisfied if  
Kennedy failed to win by the big margin for I doubt if  
he could be elected President and I should like to have things  
at the convention made easy for the former Governor of Illinois  
to get the nod for the third time.

Some people whom Sister described as "friends" came by appointme  
this afternoon. I suspect they were the Presbyterian preacher and  
wife and a guest from Berkeley, California, but I didn't ask anybody  
his profession and not a word was said by anybody about the Wanks.  
The Berkeley lady told some very interesting things about a visit  
to Hearst's Sandhollow place in California. I believe the State got it

10452

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Wednesday, April 6th, 1960.

Memorandum:  
Full summer except for the brisk breeze blowing  
all day. It would have been hot, what with the thermometer  
in the upper 80's, had it not been for the stiff wind.  
Tonight the breeze has gone to rest with the sun and for  
the first time this year, an electric fan seem pleasant  
enough.

A couple of ladies from Shreveport found their way to  
my gallery about 7:15 this morning. One introduced  
herself as Ms. Roberts who had been here before. The ladies  
were conducting a bus or two of school children to  
New Orleans, Avery Island and so on. I told them that  
as no appointment had been made, I could not give the  
her a tour. They said they knew Sister. I said I did, too.  
They departed but caught up with J. H. somewhere and the  
fact that they knew Sister served as Sesame for him. Sam  
Peace sought me out in the Ghana garden and said the children  
were being turned loose in the gardens and would I  
direct them. I would and was mildly ashamed of  
myself for being quite disagreeable to the several grown-ups,  
including la Roberts. It's the old, old story  
of not by whom a thing is done but how and I think  
40 or 50 people unannounced for 7:15 is somewhat on the  
nervous side.

But in spite of my disgruntled beginnings today,  
I got quite a lot of work done and was well enough pleased with  
undertakings. The four benches for the four corners of  
the Ghana garden got their white primer coat and will be  
dry enough tomorrow to get their top coat which will be about  
the same color as the pink doors of Ghana. I found  
some deep orange paint and mixed it into a base of  
white and got a color close enough to the one desired which  
had been made with white as a base, crimson oil paint and yellow  
which produced something vaguely pink-orange but not precisely  
the same tone but near enough.

I got around to planting a flock of sunflowers, too,  
three rows of yellow bantam corn and one row of  
red Indian corn. The big breeze is making the earth so  
dry that, having helpers, I watered all the places planted and



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so I reckon the seeds ought to be sprouting shortly.  
I am not hurrying about planting gourds, however, since  
the nights remain too cool for them to shoot along  
as they should at this time of the calendar. The  
volunteers, however, are looking pert enough and  
will provide a lust for life which the seeds planted later  
may use as an inspiration.

I think I mentioned that several fiery crosses  
had been burned in town last week, including  
one in front of the home of the negro deoter and two  
in front of the home of J. B. Williams. The  
Natchitoches radion mentioned that these known to have  
done the deeds were arrested but very delicately re-  
frained from identifying them. I turned over to New Orleans  
wave length and learned that Jack Brazier or some such,--  
a hillbilly from the hills, who ran unsuccessfully  
for Sheriff in the recent election and 4 or 5 20 year  
old youths made the crosses in Brazier's garage and  
I blined him and shot them up and fired them. Nice candidates we have running  
for Parish offices. I must ask Herman why  
his radio station was so delicate about not naming  
all of the scoundrels and especially the ex-candidate spouse  
the business. I must ask Herman why  
today I broke all former records for myself in responding  
to a wedding invitation. About 10 o'clock the postman  
brought an invitation, indicating that Mr. and Mrs. J. Al-  
phonse Prudhomme of Oakland requested the honor of my  
presence at the marriage of their daughter. While  
the postman was making his rounds down toward the dam, I  
wrapped up a zinnia picture, recently conveyed to me in  
a spiffy silver frame, by the artist, getting  
the thing to the office before the postman got back.  
And so he picked it up about 11 and as Oakland is  
only nine miles up the road and his next stop, the  
present if not the presence registered as quick  
a response as I have ever made. The Prudhommes are  
late in getting out their invitations, --I believe  
a month is the customary date in advance of  
the nuptials which, in this case, are to be celebrated on  
the same such day of this month, but they can never  
say I was guilty of dragging my feet in doing the  
expected.

And so turneth this first hot day of summer and

10454

10454

Thursday, April 7th, 1960.

#### Memorandum:

Such a lovely day, such a lovely night,  
The surprise of the day came this morning when  
J. H. started for New Orleans with some R. F. A. people  
to attend some meeting or other. He stopped off  
in Alexandria to see a specialist about his difficulty  
in talking. The specialist advised him not to  
utter a word for the next ten days and take a lot  
of medicine. For once in his life, J. H. changed his  
mind about traveling and turned round and came back home.  
As Celeste was spending the day in Alexandria, he ate  
with us at the big house. It seemed so odd that he,  
always the fountainhead of table talk, should be  
uttering not a peep. The specialist says there is no  
growth in the vocal chords but that they are remarkably  
swollen and only by giving them complete rest through non-  
use, plus proper medication will he regain his  
normal speaking voice. He spent the afternoon  
in town on business and ate an excellent supper, --  
still without talking, and I'm hoping he is getting  
some rest tonight. I must ask Herman why  
today I broke all former records for myself in responding  
to a wedding invitation. About 10 o'clock the postman  
brought an invitation, indicating that Mr. and Mrs. J. Al-  
phonse Prudhomme of Oakland requested the honor of my  
presence at the marriage of their daughter. While  
the postman was making his rounds down toward the dam, I  
wrapped up a zinnia picture, recently conveyed to me in  
a spiffy silver frame, by the artist, getting  
the thing to the office before the postman got back.  
And so he picked it up about 11 and as Oakland is  
only nine miles up the road and his next stop, the  
present if not the presence registered as quick  
a response as I have ever made. The Prudhommes are  
late in getting out their invitations, --I believe  
a month is the customary date in advance of  
the nuptials which, in this case, are to be celebrated on  
the same such day of this month, but they can never  
say I was guilty of dragging my feet in doing the  
expected.



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didn't remember me but I must have seen him on that occasion for somehow all the kids got into the act although they were excluded from participating until they invaded the place a short time before the end of that highly amusing gathering. It afforded me no end of pleasure to plant quite a goodly number of hills of pumpkins today and before day was done I got the four broad flat pink benches placed in the Ghana garden. I must say they give quite a gay note at the moment but will be less striking within a few weeks when vegetables and flowers introduce scenes of color to rob them of their striking notes of the moment. It was pleasant to hear from Sarah Irwin Jones and to learn she is passing this way on Saturday. I shall be glad to see her. I shall respond to the letter from the Louisiana Forestry Association letter in the positive but shall ask how they want feed served up so that it will harmonize in a magazine whose entire fare seems to be mostly devoted to forestry. Of course, I never quite understood how gourds got into such strange company either but somehow in such a place, gourds don't seem quite so out of place as feed. This afternoon I noticed that the wisteria is in full flower and looking mighty pretty. I did not find myself in the white garden today and so I don't know if the white wisteria is going full tilt or not but I assume it is perfectly wise in the most plants having either celer or white blossoms, the white variety usually unfolds a little ahead of the celer. I sent my reading machine to the post office to get it rigged up and I am glad that it stopped when it did, just after I had concluded a book and not when only a little remained. I don't understand how the Shreveport Times ever printed this editorial which I enclose from today's paper. It's the first time I ever knew that paper to approve of anything for a community beyond their own city.

10456

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Friday, April 8th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Another lovely summer's day.

The Weather Bureau promises a dab of rain for the morrow and on the strength of that, I got some gourds planted. There were a few clouds this afternoon but nothing to the glorious moon as all the heavens to share only with stars. Mrs. Pebody of Alexandria brought me a nice little Claude Lorraine at gaze which I had bought. He had found it in Glenora which is somewhere southwest of Alexandria, I believe. I was busy when he passed this way and so I did not get to see him. I had no the base, perhaps 3 feet in height, painted the same peach-pink as the new benches and the handrails and set the thing up in the middle of the Ghana garden after dinner and dined on another seat at the end of day and the whole thing looks pleasantly diminutive and the silver glass atop catches light prettily enough, especially the remote benches at the extremity of each of the four paths leading toward the center. Admiral Mofe of New Orleans and wife, together with another couple passed this way today. They had met H. at the store, reported themselves as friends of Harry and Del Checkley and J. H. brought them to me, whispering, as they went, that they were to be. I couldn't help laughing when the Admiral told me that he and his party were spending a few days at Black Lake, a lake, Hatchitoches, of all things, fishing. It reminded me of American sailors after world war I, cruising, decking in the Hudson and rushing over to Central Park to get rowing. I should suppose most Admirals would see enough water in the course of their careers to make water no novelty. And in view of the geographical position of the lake, I should suppose it would be a good idea to get some rowing boats.



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position of New Orleans and its proximity to Gulf deep sea fishing, the jaunt of several hundred miles to Lake to go fishing seems odd, indeed, it is not a bad notion. I know not if you ever see the New Yorker but if you do, I assume you might be interested in the article by the Paris correspondent about the impending Russian visit. --I assume the issue to have been last week. Mrs. Walker advises me the tale is well set up as seems to be so many a thing from the New York's Paris correspondent. It's so odd the lady concludes me, --it starts with a "I am sure, but I can't recall it" it seemed to you and me the thing she did about a flower show several months ago was especially fine. It had seemed to me that the grapevine had something to report that made me laugh this morn'g. I was busy with the Admiral and friends when Mr. Peachady left the Claude Lorraine at the store for me. Two minutes later, the lady across the fence went to the post office, caught sight of the subject, learned it was for me, fell in love with it and said she simply had to have one just like it. I don't see anything especially hilarious about that but somehow it made me laugh regardless. The vegetation department supplies me with a couple of joys these days. For instance, the wisteria is really beautiful and perfumes the air all over the place. The second thing is the fact that the bamboos beginning to grow at a great rate and is already about 3 feet high. I am so delighted the bamboo curtain is mounting at such a great rate that I may shortly begin navigating in greater security so far as the eyes of the outside world is concerned. I find it rather remarkable that the stalks are coming up with equal vigor both in spots untouched by the recent cleanup and in the big spaces where I burned down a pole, producing a heat at the time that must have been productive of nothing less than scorched earth. As the roots of the bamboo run almost on the surface, it seems so strange the roots weren't knocked out of business by the bonfires.

10458

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Sunday, April 10th, 1960.

Memorandum: I hope it was ever so in Lyme. Most people knew it as Palm Sunday but I knew it as Peacock Sunday, what with Tom Harris calling me from Eldorado Arkansas on Saturday afternoon, asking if he might bring the birds today. He arrived with friends and the three birds, two lady and one gentleman birds, but none. Each occupied his own crate. I should left them incarcerated until tomorrow but there was no way to get water to hem and so I waited until dusk dark and then turned them loose to feast on corn and water before taking to the magnolias. I had intended clipping their wings but Tom said they were accustomed to roost high and that if their wings were clipped and they were startled by some predatory beast, their attempt to fly would land them in their ear and they would be destroyed forthwith, he felt. I had thought of clipping their wings to keep them from getting beyond the barriers I had erected for them but Tom thought that would endanger their lives if attacked at night by a prowler as they are accustomed to roosting in trees. Accordingly, I kept them in their boxes until sun down when I turn out to corn and water and tomorrow morning we shall see what, if anything happened. Say-rah Jones and Deborah Abranson's sister, Tilly, arrived on a late Saturday morning and we had a pleasant hour together. Say-rah said she hadn't seen the Register in such a long time but understood Ray had hurt her leg. She said she would call them on reaching Baton Rouge last night. She mentioned Carolyn and said she understood she was in Peru. She said it has become almost a joke in Baton Rouge the number of telegrams, long distance calls, in-coming and out-going, that invariably punctuate any evening or dinner party which Carolyn attends. She thinks she is remarkably gifted but is frittering away her talents on attempting everything and accomplishing little more than the impressive beginnings although she said she the library was altogether delighted with the film she made for the Library Association.



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I talked with I. S. Willard last night. She had reached Natchitoches last evening and discovered she was unable to contact the person who had invited her to drive to Dallas in a car and so she had called the railroad to get a reservation on the train leaving at 8 o'clock this morning that would put her in Dallas by 8 o'clock. She will return home on Wednesday.

She said she had contacted the Registers while in Baton Rouge. Kay, she says, is having gall bladder troubles and is having a meal flown in from Chicago and is on a very strict diet. She said further that recently, perhaps this past week, Kay had started to arise by means of some sort of cord attached to something overhead and that the cord had broken and she had done something to a tendon in her leg that would take a long time to get back to normal and so is in bed, of course. Poor Kay and poor James, they seem to be never working this thing and nurse thing. Think anyone would agree they are getting, Kay is getting, much more than her share of illnesses. If any good is to be found in all these disasters, it may possibly be plumbed in the fact that she is not away in South Carolina and perhaps this misadventure is bringing the two of them even closer. I hope.

Mrs. Walker's mother called me last evening. She said her daughter had gone to have tests made at the local hospital but had been released within a couple of hours, following X-rays, etc. She said further that the lady doctor had not made a report as yet but had a feeling that possibly Mrs. Walker may have been suffering from some sort of a thyroid affliction which the tests would reveal. She said her daughter, on leaving the hospital, had dropped by her house for a bite of breakfast and then gone on and worked at the office all day.

Celeste and J. H. were delighted with their day's outing. They didn't see Mr. Hedges but they saw the head gardener who sent greetings by them. The Alvin DeBlieux came after supper bringing me a fine bottle of Sauterne and the Peacock Sunday played out and I enclose a greeting from my new feathered friends.....

10460

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Monday, April 11th, 1960.

Memorandum: A lovely summer's day.

Today has been rather long and fairly busy and I reckon I shall fold up early although the moon is so pretty, I should enjoy taking a turn along the river and perhaps indulge in a little desk work before folding up. Were my reading machine to hand, I should most certainly undertake a musicale but it will not be back before Thursday or Friday, I reckon.

In view of the propensity of peacocks to start screaming early, I got up at 4:15 to offer them an early breakfast which they appeared to enjoy without screaming. The two lady peacocks spent most of their day ranging about in the bull garden east of the weaving house while the gentleman remained in the secret garden until sundown when he took to the air waves, to join the ladies, I suppose. He is really a lovely bird and I trust he gets accustomed to his new habitation real soon and likes it.

Thelma called me early this morning. She and John had spent most of the week in New Orleans and Baton Rouge. What she wanted to tell me, she said, had to do with an educational gathering presided over by the State Commissioner of Education who suggested a regional gathering be held at Northwestern, stressing the fact that if those who attended the conclave didn't really get much out of such a meeting of better minds, it would, nevertheless, be worth their while participating if Dr. Kyser, as host, could arrange to have the group make a pilgrimage to Melrose which, according to the Commissioner, would more than justify any efforts required of participants in the Natchitoches gathering. I recall that Helma brought this gentleman to Melrose a couple of years back but I had not idea the place had been so long.



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made such an impression on him.

I spent most of my day on the end of a hoe. What with the weather so fine, I wanted to get as much of my gourd planting done as possible and there were a few vegetables I wanted to get in such as someokra and mustard. My work was complicated a little by the fact that last week I had had some assistance from Mitchell, the axe, who supposedly had done some work in getting seeds into the ground but I learned from H. this morning that Mitchell had suddenly decided on going to Houston for a week's vacation last night, around midnight, according to his wife, and so had hopped a ride with some former and ever residents, now dwelling yonder, who chanced to be here for the week end. I secured the services of Murphy to lend me a hand with some of the finer points and we got all the grounds planted, which is pleasant to realize, for the acreage is extensive, and quite a few odds and ends tidied up to boot, including an endless amount of pumpkins and cucumbers planted which I am engineering not so much for any fruit the vines may bring forth but rather for the number of weeks they will keep down where power mowers cannot operate to advantage. Some of these sections have perhaps never been planted before although for perhaps 150 years some of these spaces were part of the extended lot where cattle were housed occasionally. The earth is accordingly remarkably rich there and if I don't produce at least one pumpkin of proportions equal to Cinderella's golden coach, I shall feel disappointed.

Ora just called to report she had received a manuscript with a rejection slip in today's post and accordingly was depressed. It was the story she had read to me and her agent pointed out it was "unprofessional", whatever that means. I guess in the literary field, "unprofessional" means anything that isn't like the run of the stuff publishers like as a sure thing. The article, all about Ora's adventures in the hospital, was disarmingly clinical and at the same time humorous. In print it would occasion arched eyebrows and giggles but I think agents shy a way from anything that might provoke movement of the eyebrows. The agent also reported every publisher in the country is bound to have at least one Civil War book on his agenda and that I can believe. But Ora had

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Tuesday, April 12th, 1960.

Memorandum: I believe the peacocks spent the night at Dr. Miller's cabin. I found them there this morning and pert and sprightly they appeared to be. This noon I guided them back into the secret garden at the west end of Lucoa where they spent a quiet afternoon and are supposedly sleeping there tonight. I believe they are accustomed to the local scene now and I am going to be able to forget them by this week end. I hope, when the Emmet and Erwin offspring are expected to make their respective bows.

The reason I am anxious to have the peacocks make the secret garden their home base until they are firmly established as local residence is based on the fact that the old boxer can't reach them in that sequestered place. He seems to respect the ducks as part of the family and never so much as sniffs in their direction but he slaughters chickens straying from the coops of neighbors whether on this side of the fence or on the other and even invades the yards of cabins to tear up the poultry. It accordingly seems well to get the peacocks firmly established as part of the local decor before the boxer feels inclined to have a go at them as intruders.

Tuesday is among my favorite days of the week and I am always glad when J. H. comes to the big house for dinner, as on Tuesday, when Celeste is spending the day with her girl friends at the country club. Today J. H. brought me a flock of young helle and of hot pepper plants for the Ghana garden vegetable section. He seems to have



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Wednesday, April 13th, 1960

forgotten the somewhat imposing quantity of seeds I ordered for that section and I accordingly order same on my own hook today. Summer is approaching with such rapid strides that I want to get things like leaf lettuce, carrots, beets, etc., into production so they will form pretty ruffles around the parterres by the time the crepe myrtles in the background are in flower and time for photographing same will be upon us. This year I shall not await the advent of an excellent but an undependable photographer but shall accept the work of a less artist as being better than nothing.

I found a couple of priests awaiting me on my return to Yucca after supper tonight. They seem to be attached to the college in town. I found them young and gay and as both come from Ireland, we could re-fight the Civil War and do all sorts of hand springs that might not have been possible, were any one of us three of local origin.

I must remember to tell the Walkers that one of them, on learning my identity, exclaimed: "...but I read your one River Memo weekly in the Hatchitoches Times....". I was glad to learn from Zelma this evening that Dereatha, the regular cook, returned from the Shreveport hospital today. She had been home a week but had had to go back for a check up, following her recent operation and the report was that it had been a complete success. I reckon she will be returning to her pots and pans shortly and I shall be glad to see her but, at the same time, I shall be missing good old Zelma.

And speaking of good old Zelma, I am reminded that I occasionally see her granddaughter, Emily Solomon, who comes to help her grandma some evenings. She is the first of five daughters of King Solomon and has many to tens of personality, perhaps more than anyone of her age that I have met in years. Oddly enough, there is something about her manner reminding me of Miss T. Bankhead on the better side. Emily is precisely 10 and seems about 20. Were she white, she might expect a remarkable career,

10464

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Wednesday, April 13th, 1960

Memorandum: It was supposed to rain today. It was sunny this morning, clouds rolled up threateningly about 2 this afternoon but vanished without doing anything and tonight is as clear as a bell. The peacocks lingered in this appointed place until about 6 this morning when they went for a flight in the fence and a walk around the big old iron pot in front of Yucca. Before this late date, I should have mentioned their names. I guess the male, with the lovely dot of color in the center of his tail feathers, -- a small sample of which you have seen, is, naturally enough, called Det. His twin lady companions, who are, unlike him, forever dashing about, are, with equal naturalness called Dash, -- Dash One and Dash Two. After a five o'clock breakfast on corn, they like to promenade sedately, pecking at bugs they may discover on grasses and frequently sit down, all three in some shadey nook, especially just beyond the avant-cour where the parrot lilies grow luxuriantly and almost conceal them from view. I had a fairly busy morning. I am continuing to plant vegetables in the Ghana garden. Juanita Bessel phoned from town about 8:30, asking if she could get some Aunt's Beard. After coffee across the fence, I got her three wheelbarrow loads and put them on the bench by the side gate awaiting her arrival. A servant came shortly thereafter to say Blythe with three ladies was chatting with J. A. at the front gate and would be in shortly. The boxer came with them and met them near the big pot and accepted an invitation to break bread at camp this noon. Suddenly a frantic scream cut off conversation. The boxer had gone into the parrot lilies beyond the fence and had grabbed Det who was screaming bloody-murder. A broom being convenient to hand, I broke it over the boxer's back, startling him so that he dropped Det and took off homeward. The ladies gathered up a fine bouquet made up of most of Det's tail feathers and wing-plumage while I went to the kitchen.



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a couple of handfuls of breast feathers embossed the  
parrot lilies. Dot remained on the ground and made no  
ever to move when I went to pick him up. A  
thorough examination revealed an humiliating  
less of fine feathers and a bloody scratch across his back.  
I carried him to the secret garden where I turned him loose,  
and he ambled off under his own steam and shortly afterward  
he joined the ladies who had arrived at Dr. Miller's by air.  
About 5 tonight, I guided them back to the secret garden.

At supper, I asked J. H. if he had heard of the episode.  
He hadn't. He expressed concern over Dot's condition and  
asked if I thought he should be examined by a doctor. I  
thought not. He said the boxer wasn't worth a damn, that one  
peacecock was much more decorative and suggested I remind him  
on the morrow to get a dog collar and chain with a view to keeping  
the boxer anchored. Naturally, that would be  
a most impracticable thing to do for what the poor dog would  
do all day, tied up in the shadow of an untenanted house, I  
cannot imagine. The colored folks would like that, as he is  
forever killing their chickens but it would certainly  
be unkind to the dog and would distress his mistress beyond  
measure. What the next chapter in the dog-peacecock story  
will be, only Fate can reveal. Like Scarlet O'Hara,  
I'll worry about that tomorrow. I'll be back in the morning.  
The noon repast at the camp was ever so pleasant and  
of course reminded me of little Miss Lee as I sat in the self same  
spot under the cedar where she and Destand had enjoyed such a  
pleasant hour together a while back which, as I sat there, seemed  
but yesterday. The resistance piece in the food section  
was a heavenly shrimp gumbo, about half and half liquid and  
shrimp. This was followed by a marvelous vegetable salade with  
no end of accompanying pickles, olives and such like and  
three kinds of delicious breads and fancy crackers without end.  
Dessert was some sort of a marvelous pudding, sort of  
faint chocolate or caramel, submerged home made cake and the  
whole lot in frozen cream. Instead of coffee, lemonade,  
neatly tintured with mint leaves of rarer aroma than usual, finished  
off the meal and just about finished off me. I had never  
met any of the ladies, one of them from Lunenburg Plantation  
in Rapides who was 65, sweet but dull. I had to  
some helpers awaiting me at home and so I had to  
pull myself away within a couple of hours but gladly  
would have remained longer, had circumstances and company  
been both different and more stimulating. I got no  
"Learning" tonight, what with the  
programs cluttered up with pre-election claptrap for  
Tuesday is the legal date for ballot casting of  
which the primaries two or three months back did all the  
actual drum beating and decision making but still the  
politicians must talk.....

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Thursday, April 14th, 1960.

Memorandum: Another lovely summer's day, with enough thin clouds  
in mid afternoon to suggest we might have rain but within  
half an hour they gave way to clear skies again.  
Dot and Dashes One and Two remained in the secret garden  
all day and seemed content with their habitat. The  
dog made one round and sniffed at the gate of the garden  
but a descending brown stick impelled him to  
return to home base.

J. H. was not talking tonight at the supper table.  
The clerk volunteered the information that he had been  
to the doctor again and that the doctor had once more  
admonished him not to speak. He waved a greeting to  
me across the table. It is so seldom I get provoked at anything that  
I must confess that twice I permitted myself that luxury today.  
During the past two or three days I have been preparing  
the Ghana garden for planting. I had asked a friend  
to purchase seeds in town, counting on delivery this  
morning so that I could, with the assistance of others,  
get the whole thing taken care of this afternoon before  
the prolonged week end got under way. I wanted to do all the  
planting at the same time in order that it might arise from  
the good earth with perspiration and evenness.  
I had carefully figured out the minimum of  
seeds I would need and after the store had failed to  
secure these for me, I set down the quantities I  
wanted with great care, happy at the prospect of  
getting a lot of work done this afternoon. Picture  
my amazement this morning when the seeds were delivered with the  
explanation that the people at the seed store had  
stated that I was ordering twice as much as I needed and therefore  
only half the amounts requested were delivered.  
Well, I did what I could and planted all the seeds I  
had which is another way of saying only half the garden  
could be planted. But I couldn't do the garden I  
and just plant an even half for some of the Arabesques  
.....



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Good Friday, April 15th, 1960.

I had planned couldn't be half planted since almost a week will elapse before I can get the additional seeds required, what with Good Friday being a holiday, Saturday a fellow-up holiday, Sunday the Sabbath, Monday something or other and Tuesday election that closes many places. I suppose I shouldn't complain but thank the Lord there are still places that aren't intent on selling things whether people need them or not. I had certainly seen a novelty position for an American merchant to take, but, nevertheless, I still can't see how the seed store, knowing Belrose and me, could imagine it was qualified to guess what quantity of seeds I might want.

While engaged in one operation, a servant from next door passed by Ghana. He reported a little French car at the side gate and, from the noise he had heard of coughing inside the big house, assumed the car might be Joe or Henry's. About an hour later, when leaving Ghana for Yucca to scrape up some more seeds, I bumped into three dogs, -- some Mrs. Brown, I believe, La Montespan and daughter who is taller than her mama. I was provoked. They had proffered me a gift of wine. I invited them to taste a glass of some but said quite frankly I couldn't wait to linger long while my assistant waited. They were heading for Oklahoma City for the week end. They were dying for information, and I, with wonderful dumbness, had none to give about anything save flora and fauna in which they, of course, weren't interested. On handing them to their car, I discovered it was some American brand so I concluded that perhaps they had just arrived when I first saw them. If so, their visit was brief enough.

At supper, not Joe, but Lloyd Weng, en route from L. S. U. to Shreveport, I suppose, was at table. I had to inquire his identity by stealth as he has no manners and never speaks except on impulse. How long he will linger and which members of what families may or may not come, I know not. I got my reading machine back today and hope I may keep it long enough tonight to start a biography of John Paul Jones by Samuel Eliot Morison, an historian whom I like to read much. I hope there may be a book on the life of a measure of leisure in Lyme and a good book for the week end, too.....

10468

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Good Friday, April 15th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Warm as summer, a thin gauze of clouds that let the sunshine filter through while an occasional drop of dew would fall in night the gauze remains the stars shining through and we are promised the same for the week end.

At first dark tonight we didn't know which of the family would appear for the week end. Lloyd left for home this morning and says he will be back tomorrow but that is saying more than anyone else has said thus far. Well at least -- the

There were some telephone calls about the Reform Plantation column. Three different people spell the name in three different ways. The Court records spell it in the fashion I used and I believe Lyle spelled it that way in his Old Louisiana. I must check on that for fun.

With the sketchy information available, it would appear there has always been the same confusion that so often obtains in constructing family trees, to wit, that one generation gets tangled up with another and I think that this may be true in the case of Old Francois. Old Francois married Ausite, sometimes spelled as Ouyte, other times spelled Oussite whose last name was Rachel. Unless old Francois married Maria Elena Seepini, sometimes spelled Marie Helene Seepanni. I might add that Robert Robinson is sometimes spelled

Robert Rauben, sometimes Raubeux and a couple of other ways that include me at the moment and it doesn't matter. But with descendants aplenty and none of them knowing anything about their family and ancestors but clinging dogmatically to some pet form of spelling, one cannot expect quite a lot of excitement to get generated, once the one or the other finds a spelling that doesn't seem to be the same as they remember it. What is important is the fact that a whole lot of people are airing their views on the matter and probably some are cursing me for bringing up the matter in the first place. But all the scuffle is good for the newspapers and so, naturally, I am delighted.



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A heavy dew last night was just right for the half of the garden I planted yesterday and, thanks to a happy circumstance, I believe I got the balance of the required seeds today for tomorrow's delivery so things may get bridged in the planting department rather sooner than I had hoped.

I saw no visitors today except Mrs. Walker and her mother who dropped in for 15 or 20 minutes just as I was starting for supper. I missed seeing Mr. and Mrs. H. and the clerk but should have heard little news anyway, I suppose, since J. H. isn't talking. I at least didn't suppose to be although I did bump into him at the store this afternoon and he asked me to have a look and inquire about the health of Dot. Dot is still pretty close to the sunken or secret garden today. He got out, --that is flew over the fence about 5 o'clock, this evening but immediately tried to get back in which he did when I opened the gate for him. His girl friends, Dash One and Two, flew in before 5 o'clock this morning and I saw them in the house on twice strolling about but so far as I know they haven't returned to Dot and say for all I know he may be out again in search of them. At 10 I'm going to give my new neighbors a fair amount of attention but I'm not dreaming of spending my whole life in the dual role of guardian and nursemaid. There's a wedding scheduled for this week end when the daughter of Mitchell the arc, married Jake Cohen, is married to the son of the late Hyman Cohen. Mitchell's daughter is probably in her early twenties and has been married but her husband is possessed of three children, one of whom may have been by her husband who married her off to Houston for a few weeks and then left her. Jake has several children, all of whom are older than the new bride so that I don't think there will be lots of grandchildren for the youthful bride. I have always noted with interest the number of people of color in this area who do not take into consideration any approximation of age in evaluating their romances, with the groom sometimes, as in the present case, much older than the bride, in just as many cases, the groom much younger than the bride. This difference in years never seems to make any difference in the success or lack of it in such marriages and, for the most part, it would seem that the lasting qualities of such matrimonial experiments seem to pan out fully as well as those which are hedged in by couples in the same age brackets.

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Easter Sunday, April 17th, 1960.

Memorandum: It was such a pleasant week end, the weather cloudy but mild. I fear there may have been a dab of rain in Lyme although I have somehow missed all weather reports from that section this week end.

With the marvelous persistence that little Miss Lee somehow always manages to effect, a delectable greeting from her direction reached Lestan at mid morning of Holy Saturday, setting the seal of happiness on the entire week end, what with the car lovely, the message so sweet, the portrait of a well known character so perfectly executed. Is it any wonder that all week end Lestan has been saying over and over to himself: "...My cup runneth over..." I have wondered but haven't inquired as to how it was that nobody of the family honored up this week end, except Lloyd. He was back here early on Saturday morning, following his brief Friday visit from L. S. U. to Shreveport. He remained last night and left to visit his cousins in New Roads right after Sunday dinner. He wasn't sure if he would return here tonight or go back to aton Rouge. Celeste tells me he failed in every one of his mid term subject I suppose the reason he isn't lingering at home is because of the racket going on there although, since his papa is leaving Monday for someplace, perhaps Ohio, to get his seeing eye dog, one would have supposed he might have spent the day under the parental roof. I understood him to say his brother, John, was staying at college in the same part where his parents live. I assume Lloyd is failing in everything may be due in part to lack of proper foundation. The high school years must have been a perpetual uproar at home and although John seemed to make it, Lloyd obviously hasn't. Saturday afternoon, one eyed Beau Mac, a local field hand, tapped my door. Stutteringly, he said he wanted me to see a lady. I looked and saw a pure Hephrithite, tall, lithe, smartly but conservatively dressed and withal as regal as the figure in a rare travel book of a native daughter of Africa. The lady was the color of the darkest mahogany you ever saw. She was Beau's daughter, Emily, who 8 or 10 years ago had been my secretary. Her only costume jewelry was a pair of rings, --filigree ivory about the size of a silver dollar. She was ravishing. She told me her first marriage to one Jackson had been unsuccessful but that she had re-married very happily and



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had two children, a little girl a year and a half old and a little boy of four months. She said her mama, Juanita, who used to cook here, was just fine. She has re-married, too, and lives in Shreveport as does Emily. Little old Melviny and Beau are grown up now, she said, and my beard seems to sag a further and further along the floor as I sense the passage of the years.

At supper, I mentioned she had come to see me. The clerk said she had stopped at the store to see J. H. The latter still isn't talking but he nodded his head approvingly. I remarked she had been a prize secretary and the clerk recked me by saying: "Yeah....and she always knew her place...." I countered with the request that somebody kindly pass the biscuits and let the whole thing go. "Her place...." and what that might be I should like to know since, to my way of thinking she was probably one of the most attractive young women I had ever encountered. Quite a few people of local origin came home from Houston for Easter and many of them dropped by Yucoo to say howdy and I was enchanted to see all of them. There was a baseball game this afternoon and tonight there's a dance. So many of the Houston travelers, due back to work on Monday morning, swing out here on Sunday nights until midnight when the caravan gets under way westward, a veiding, considerable traffic at that hour and arriving home just in time to leap from their horseless carriages into their work. Last night I got around, to read a little from the biography of John Paul Jones by Samuel Eliot Morrison. I wish I could recommend the book to nobody who wants entertainment for it contains lots of material of new interest and appeal to the average reader like myself, such as how differently one elevates sails on a sloop as opposed to a bark, and such like. But I love reading Morrison for he is a thorough research worker and I'm always stumbling over interesting nuggets as I wade through what to me is superfluous detail. So far East r week end, people coming and going, all pleasant, the weather mild but best of all, the greetings from Lyma that made everything feel so pleasantly warm about the heart....

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Monday, April 18th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A beautiful, sunny day but a little windy, what with a spanking breeze out of the East that made it a little cool in spite of the sun and tonight the thermometer will sag to 44, it is said.

Just after breakfast this morning, Zelma started for her house over near the Rand cabin. On the way she met Bluff, hastening to meet her and to report that her husband, Puny, had started coughing as he started to get up, fell back on the bed and had died. Zelma had a momentary shock and then she went to the house. Puny is about the same age as J. H. around 68 and had more friends and relatives scattered about than almost anyone else on the plantation. I suppose the funeral will be Monday and will be tremendous. I suppose his son, Jake, will be coming from California, as well as his former wife, Massaline, also from the west coast, and his stepsons, Little King, Biggie and so on. What with Doretha still in the recuperative stage, following her recent operation, and Zelma confronted with a funeral, we have no cook in the big house and so we are breaking bread across the fence. The lady on that side plans to bring a frolic, beginning Friday and so her house girl will probably dispense food over the weekend. It would be a wonderful time for a flock of kin folks to bust in unannounced. I finished the borders in the Chand garden today in spite of the high winds that made difficult the planting of the smaller seeds, like lettuce, somewhat difficult but I guess I got everything into place in the lettuce, carrot and beet edgings. I planted quite a lot of mustard andokra, and a couple of ciroles. I had expected to plant more things, egg plant, tomatoes by the dozen, etc., but when the weather bureau at noon said it would be chilly tonight with rising temperatures on the scene it behooved me to wait. I had a good time today.



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I was in the midst of planting this afternoon when  
two people, quite unknown, the one to the other, came to see me.  
Carlton Brown who is working in Houston and who had come home for  
the weekend, had missed his ride back last night when  
he went to a dance at the local honkey-tonk. The other  
visitor was Father Callahan whom I had not seen since the  
beginning of Lent. I gave the Church my respects by knocking off  
my gardening to sit and chat for half an hour although  
I secretly resented it, wondering how the clergy, seeing people  
up to their hips in plantings could accept an invitation  
to pause for port. But I reckon the little rest period probably  
did both of us good and I always enjoy the Reverend Father.  
Tonight Mrs. Richardson of Natchitoches, telephoned to thank  
me for the piece I did about Reform Plantation. I suggested  
she drop in to see me one of these days so that we might take  
an inventory of plants she will be needing so that we  
can make a note as to when these items can be moved to best advantage  
and then transport them from time to time as the calendar date  
for the individual things arrives. She wants to and shouldn't have it  
she wants it she should. She thought to have some Orinoco bananas,  
ribbed grass, mandarin, butterfly lilies, dahlias and so on  
and I shall be entranced to engineer the business.  
It certainly is a pleasure to lend a hand in such an undertaking  
to anyone so interested as she. I shall be glad to  
do it. I shall be glad to do it. I shall be glad to do it.  
An article in yesterday's Shreveport Times carried  
the architect's sketch of a new motel being erected  
in Shreveport for four hundred thousand dollars and  
spoke of plans for another in the New Orleans area. The  
corporation is Hollywood Hills, and a list of the directors included  
L. D. Jones of Natchez. I took this to be Natchez, Louisiana,  
and L. D. Jones is Bill Jones whom I telephoned to  
congratulate. He seemed pleased. I did say that these  
motel are for people of color, and that often  
societies of color couldn't hold conventions because  
there were no places for them and a club incorporated in these  
motel would make that possible. I liked everything about it and  
hope all the investors make a billion dollars.

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Tuesday, April 19th, 1960.

Memorandum: Peer Zelma must have had a very difficult day yesterday.  
Last night she experienced some sort of convulsions and  
had to have sedation around 1 a.m. She has people  
staying with her and following the doctor's visit in the  
week hours, the lady doctor, she had to go to  
town this morning for further treatment. I suppose  
there may have been more than one contributing  
cause to her highly depressed state, aside from Puny's  
death. One of these, at least, was her disappointment  
in not being able to reach King Solomon by phone.  
The people who had already heard about it explained  
to her that King Solomon is having some kind of difficulties  
at the moment where ever he is staying, perhaps South Carolina,  
for it seems he was at the wheel of his car the other day  
when it ran down a child, breaking its leg, etc., and  
this episode in so short a time following the hit  
and run episode here when his car, driven by Junior Fugabou,  
turned a car over three times and sped on, killing  
nobody but causing several passengers in the other car to  
be hospitalized.

It is thought the funeral will be on Sunday. It is  
interesting that during the past year or two,  
Sunday funerals in Protestant Churches for plantation  
folks are becoming more popular, primarily, I suppose,  
because relatives and friends from afar find it possible  
to participate more readily in week end doings.  
I suppose most Baptist preachers in the colored section have  
some gainful employment other than soul saving, marriages  
and burials during the week and so they tend to welcome  
the Sunday funerals. The Catholic clergy, on the other hand,  
seem inclined to discourage final rites on the Sabbath.  
I suppose this stems in large measure from the fact that  
a Mass is to be said for each funeral and as Sunday is  
usually pretty heavily loaded with Masses for the Catholic  
clergy under normal circumstances, they tend to shy away  
of additional services of kindred nature.



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It was nice hearing from Robina and to learn her medical report is so promising. It is good to know that things are so pleasant at Briarwood. Let us hope that both Robina and Carrie have smooth sailing straight ahead.

A lot of stuff planted last week is beginning to push up out of the good earth, - gourds, sunflowers, mustard, corn and so on. The winds have dried the top soil so much that little clouds sail away from the hoe every time it is used but a couple of inches below the surface, the ground seems surprisingly moist, as I found out discovered late this evening when setting out a few dozen tomato plants and a few egg plants. The peppers set out last week deserved an extra drink at twilight and before I was at the end of the first row, the ones first to receive and of water began perking up, after a day of brilliant sunshine from a cloudless sky.

The peacocks seem to have developed a pattern of existence that already has probably become habitual to them. They spend the early dawning hours in the secret garden where they breakfast. They have discovered some loop hole in the pickets leading to the white garden in back of Yucca and move into that section about 9 o'clock where they get a bit of exercise in search of bugs, I suppose. Then they spend the better part of the warmer hours in the shade of the magnolia tree behind Yucca.

I thought the quotation from Sarah Jones quite apt. That reminds me of the line in the Rocket's card from Peru, thanking me for the birthday greeting of flowers, sent to Shreveport, which she never saw since she was in New Orleans and hopping off for Lima on the 29th. The fact that she knew somebody got the flower's at Ola Mae's office indicates she must have communicated with the aforesaid office before taking off or received a report after leaving the United States. It is but natural that Ola Mae should have her South American address. It would be interesting to know if anyone else has.

Tonight I must knock off a column for next week. I haven't an idea at the moment but perhaps something about vegetables might be in order since I seem to be standing on my head in that department this week. Perhaps an ancient title like "Of Cabbages and Kings" would serve.....

10476

ckueubgabyt negro metel enclosed. I don't want it back.

Wednesday, April 20th, 1960.

Memorandum: still and I see how much a fine and not a full summer's day. A few clouds seemed to hold a promise but my sense it was evident the promise didn't mean anything and this evening the weather bureau says there's no chance of rain very soon.

The gardens are so fragrant these days, it is a great pleasure just to saunter along the paths exhaling each new vagrant breeze and anticipating the appearance of the flowers, as yet unseen, whose perfume is so pleasant. At the moment, the mock orange is unusually intense. I couldn't resist plucking a spray this evening and giving it a place on my desk along side this machine, it is so delightful. The wisteria lingers on to add its aroma, the magnolia forsooth, suggesting an ultra refined banana oil pungency and the yucca laurel is spreading its lavender essence all over the place. In the top of the old grandiflora by the side gate I detect an early magnolia while along the path just beneath, hard by the little old cannon, three Devil lilies are standing up red and as preside as burn stigma broom sticks.

Garmen called me from her home today where she remains in bed but is promised that if all goes well, she may hope to be in circulation again on Monday. I had to talk with the Red Cross this afternoon about getting some service people home for funerals and whatnot and was pleased to learn that Little King is now en route. He will be of considerable strength to his mama at a time when Zelma needs him much. According to the latest plans, the funeral for Puny will be held Sunday in Morris Hill, off Cognac way, somewhat northeast of here, along the Little River road to Montgomery Ferry. I recall so vividly when Puny's son, Jake, lived up that way somewhere and how he used to come down through the woods on foot to spend an evening here and how, before reaching the house, he would always take off his shoes and appear in the deer barefoot so that he wouldn't be soiling the floor by tracking in dew, a custom not so common now and a consideration on the part of Cane River people of color that was as effective then, I guess, as it is now, although the world has turned around many times since then.



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I guess I had better accustom myself to the opening of the baseball season and see if I can like it. I couldn't get 12:30 noon news and the weather bureau report yesterday because a baseball game had crowded out the routine program. Tonight I tuned in for the late news and been disappointed in not finding the type of learning I wanted but was offered another baseball game instead.

I regret that my reading machine isn't functioning. It performed perfectly after its return from the repair shop last week and but the turn table refused to budge the next time I got around for a dose of historical investigation. I shall send it in to town again on the morrow and trust I shall have better luck on the next go round. I'm too busy and too tired to do much reading at the close of these days but it's always a delight to know that it is there and in working condition, even if I use it but scantily.

It is pleasant to report that Celeste appears in gay spirits. I coffee-ed with her at 9 but did not see her when we gentlemen dined without her across the fence. She having gone to a lady luncheon in town. Mrs. J. H. Williams, or some such. She departs for Mansura tomorrow or Friday and will remain until early in the week, perhaps Monday or Tuesday so that the burden of entertaining gentlemen at dinner while the big house cooks are away will not fall so heavily on her shoulders as on her servant's.

To nobody's surprise, the winner of the Democratic primary in December or January was the election to the governor's post in yesterday's balloting. That isn't news and Mr. Davis seems to have taken the victory at the polls stolidly enough. I believe there were three candidates for Governor running, and I was interested that following the huge majority of the Democratic candidate, the Republican candidate came in second, something less than a hundred thousand votes to the Jimmy Davis ballots to the tune of more than four hundred thousand votes. What pleased me most about the whole business was the fact that the States Rights candidate came in a mighty poor third. The States Rights is composed of the "lunatic fringe", especially the bigots in racial matters,

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Thursday, April 21st, 1960.

Full summer and much too dry.

J. H. left early this morning for New Orleans. He plans returning tomorrow night, stopping off in Baton Rouge to confer with the general regarding their Shreveport Sister. She called J. H. last night and it was painfully evident that she was as high as a kite. Her jealousy of the sympathy her husband receives from people has got her into such a pitch it is felt she might go in for violence, probably against the blind doctor, possibly against herself. He wonders either if her sons wanted to be home over the Easter holiday. The doctor is currently in Ohio or somewhere getting acquainted with his new seeing-eye dog. The daughter is with the mother and it must be difficult for that teenager, what with a drunken mother all over the place.

On the pleasant side, it was a pleasure to hear from Helen. The letter from Inez Schaeffer came in today's post, although mailed on the 18th. Four days seems long enough to travel from Lake Charles here. She suggests I advise her if I am not to be at home on Sunday. With the out-going mail leaving on Friday, any communication ought to reach her by Monday, if it takes as long on the way as hers to me and that would reach her after she had completed her trip. But I expect to be at home on Sunday, and I hope, alone.



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I don't know if I finished the last sentence or not. The artist called to relate local gossip, none of which was very interesting. She remarked that lythe was up to the camp yesterday but probably merely made a round to see Zelma. Puny's son, Jake, arrived from California today and is in town with the expectation of making a round tomorrow. I shall be glad to see him again, after all these years.

I set out a flock of tomato and cabbage plants toward sundown but I doubt if they do anything as the roots seemed of mighty poor quality and so I shall put some other things in at close proximity so that if they pass out before getting started, something else will. I have been thinking of the hand to fill in. The prospect of engineering two gardens in one gives lots of latitude for endless planting and while I should like to have things looking spiffy in early summer, or even late spring, I am counting on the endless rows of crepe myrtles carrying the deep summer coloring and May first planting of cecombs which will give promise for more coloring in September and October. My designs and long range plans are at once mystifying and incomprehensible to whatever assistants may come my way and I must say I sympathize with the poor brags that have never seen an ordered vegetable garden and can't possibly imagine getting stuff in the ground that will make patterns in May, again in July and again in October. I may not think myself very smart either when the results of my handiwork starts emerging, --if ever.

Another interruption. --Fugabou calling me to ask if he can get some wisteria vines for some camp where he works on week ends. He said there was somebody there at his house who wanted to speak with me, a man named Jake, offspring of Puny. Coincidences are certainly pleasant in this instance.

My reading machine went to town today. I held the thought it may have to go to Baton Rouge. Ordinarily, I should miss it over the week end but what with a wake at Zelma's, many folks passing this way on Saturday night and a funeral Sunday and the P. D. Schaefer and a couple of articles to knock off, perhaps I can fill in the time somehow.

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As turned this page the clock said 11:00. It was Friday, April 22nd, 1960. I was sitting at the table and the clock said 11:00. I was sitting at the table and the clock said 11:00. I was sitting at the table and the clock said 11:00.

#### Memorandum:

Full summer. During the night, thanks to the warmth, the leaves on the pecan trees opened to a little over half their full spread. By tomorrow morning, I reckon the limbs will be concealed by the 1960 raincoat.

The only news of interest came in today's post from James, giving some notion as to the progress of his patient. That she may be able to walk by August is promising even though August is bound to seem quite a piece from April for most patients with such a prospect. I must get a letter off to the lady tonight.

A slight interruption at this point when somebody knocked at the door. --Joe Henry, arriving unannounced, as usual. --

Just called me this morning to say she had talked with Juanita A. Last night she asked them to tell me if she saw or if they saw him, to say she wasn't coming. --Joe came here without stopping in town and so I could relay the news to him, where J. H. was hiding, the death of Puny, etc., etc.

Mrs. Alton Lambre is my next interrupter. She just phoned to say some lovely people from Arkansas, --Magnolia, -- were in town for a dinner being given by somebody or other and might they come down tomorrow. I told her frankly the place was too fraught with family and she said she understood.

No wonder ladies complain that I send them unfinished letters. I guess I'm a bit of a mess. I even finished a memo at the beginning of a week end when there seems so much hurly-burly up and the read. --



08401

10481

As I turned this page, the clerk 'phoned me from town, saying that just before he had closed the store, Sister had called from Shreveport. She said she was bringing some people down for a tour tomorrow afternoon. She said she would return home to Shreveport with them but would be back to Melrose on Tuesday. It looks like quite a week ahead.

I measured the hana garden today, being tired of estimating its dimensions. I found it to be 224 feet in length and 144 feet in width. The vegetable section in front of the house is separated from Ghana by a bamboo fence, leaving the vegetable plot approximately 224 one hundred forty four feet by approximately one hundred fifty two feet, making the place almost but not quite square. The fact that this plot, given over exclusively to vegetables, is about twice the size of entire town lots which include dwelling, garage, yard, not to mention a vegetable plot, it perhaps explains why the people in town find the seed store find it impossible to imagine anyone wanting as much seed as I have ordered during the past month.

The hour is 10:30 and the night continues busy. Just as I concluded the above paragraph, I. S. Willard called. She had much to relate about Art, having returned tonight from someplace down in South Louisiana on the East bank of the Mississippi, --not too far from New Orleans, I guess. It had seemed wiser to her, however, to drive home following the Mississippi side of the river and so had passed through Natchez late this evening but she had stopped only to get a newspaper and had not telephoned anyone and so had no particular news from the Bluff City.

She did wish me to do an article for some Art publication in which she is interested and went to some length to explain its general character. I asked her, however, if she would be so kind as to jot down the particulars, general subject matter, length desired and so on and my purpose was two fold: first, I hadn't paid too close attention to the verbal details she and given, and second, I had a feeling that if I had my acceptance on written information as to various points, the points not being likely to show up too soon, the whole business might be forgotten so I could get on with other stuff on which I had better get busy.

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P. S. - as I was making the envelope for this, I. S. Willard, --see below, phoned, saying she would be in Manhattan from May 1st to 14th, attending some national Art Educational convention. The information is simply for your convenience to be used or not as you please or as circumstances may or may not permit pursue.

Sunday, April 24th, 1960.

#### Memorandum:

Lots and lots of summer and not the slightest hint of rain.

The nicest possible event of the week end of many events was the letter to hand from Lyme in Saturday's post.

I want to thank you most particularly for the charming vignette of impressions and thoughts, stemming from the arrival of Spring in Central Park and the sentiments surrounding these impressions. It gave such a delightful warm glow to my heart that I have re-read the message twice and loved it the more with each re-reading.

The flight of the Rocket to Lyme out of Lima was a surprise, showing clearly enough that although one, by this date date, should be galvanized against any sort of the surprise from that direction, surprises are forever turning up.

I shall be all ears for the next report that may cover the conference that was to tread hard on the heels of the initial conversation by phone.

And that reminds me that Irma Sempayac Willard will be at the King Edward Hotel on 44th Street on May 1st.

If you care to establish contact with her, she would be delighted to see you. If you do not, she will not be surprised. She does not have your name but knows there is a chance that a friend of mine might phone her. She is desirous and if she did the name, which she hasn't, would not use it under any circumstance.

Imagine my surprise when I learned on Saturday morning that Mrs. Went's name was in the Shreveport Society news as entertaining Iris Janciers on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of this coming week. I thought she had announced she was coming here on Tuesday, which she had but that must have been when she was drunk. In any event, she put in an appearance on Saturday afternoon with three people who, oddly enough, seemed civilized. I think she was just a little high. I asked J. H. later if he thought she and the doctor would separate and he said he doubted it. Who knows anything about what that wacky family may or may not do. Thank



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Heaven the Saturday session didn't last long. She asked me who was cooking at the big house. I told her nobody was. She flared: "Well, I hope you don't think I could come down here and cook for you all!" I assured her we were getting along very nicely.

Monday, April 25th, 1960.

Joe said he was leaving this morning early. He remained and had dinner with J. H. and me, although we had planned to eat alone. I noticed his car was still here at 9 tonight. He must be in town with J. H. I wanted to go with J. H. to Puny's funeral at noon but thought it unfair to do so since the Schaeffers had said they would lunch early in Shreveport and be here early. They got here at 4:30 and so I lost the funeral. Blythe and Jean had come about 2 ad remained until the Schaeffers arrived. I was thunder-struck when Carmen's sister, Mrs. Jack Durant, appeared in the party and I was delighted to see Irma S. Willard. La Durant always spoils every tour I try to give. Irma always adds to the tour. This afternoon the Durant element triumphed and I found the whole thing unsatisfactory.

Blythe and Jean spent Easter Sunday with Carrie at Briarwood. Obviously Carrie did not tell them she had entertained on Good Friday which is just as well since Robina and Blythe don't hit it off worth a cent. Blythe, contrary to Robina, found Carrie looking frail. She thought Briarwood, however, never looked leulier. Isn't it interesting how impressions will take on parallels and opposites in such a fashion. How things are rocking along in Mansura this week end, I wouldn't know but I have no doubt everything is perfectly darling. One thing is certain, the weather is favorable at least and it is doubtful if there are any little clouds of worry about responsibilities at home to mar the frolic. All I can do is but wonder at the strange world we live in and how it jogs along as well as it does.

I wanted to water the tomatoes, peppers, egg plants, etc., tonight but before the last pilgrim had departed, it was too dark to distinguish the rows of plants from the rows of seeds and so I had to forgo that pleasure. But I could see the turkey-like shapes of Dash One and Dash Two and a pair of guineas J. H. had sent me on Saturday and praise the Lord the human biddies had all gone on their way. I'm dying to hear the tale about Ola Mae.....

10484

10484

Monday, April 25th, 1960.

Memorandum

Summer continues although there was a little sprinkle about 3 o'clock this afternoon. Like a heavy dew and I know not if it was sufficient to encourage garden seeds to germinate but doubt it. Perhaps a real dew tonight may add the magical touch to start things.

I cannot begin to tell you how much I appreciate your kindness in taking time out on Friday evening to acquaint me with the latest news from Lima. I held the thought that you all had a nice little chat in spite of pressures that must have made the interlude a little hectic, what with so much cooking on the business front.

I'm glad you mentioned the matter of Kay's hip. Intentionally I didn't bother to mention it when she passed this way with the film one Sunday a while back. I figured it this way: --she is frequently in Baton Rouge. If she felt like calling Kay she could do so. If Kay had wanted her to know, she could have written her. If I did not mention the matter to the Pocket, the Pocket could always have a fine alibi in saying I had not mentioned it, assuming she might have qualms about not phoning, had she been informed. It is high time, now that she is back, that she should at least drop in to see Kay or at least give her a buzz when in Baton Rouge but if she hasn't time to do that, she can still offer the fact that she had not been informed by me and while she apparently needs no alibi for her game of hide and seek, an alibi must sometimes come in handy. The lamentable fact is, I fear, that she is so busy with her many projects that it never occurs to her that she keeps amenities which you, Helen and I would want to observe but which she never seems to give any thought as to observing or not observing them. One makes a mistake if one supposes she willfully snubs one by her prolonged silences. The actual truth of the matter is much more devastating, --

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it isn't so much an intentional over-sight, it simply puts these out of sight out of mind, one gathers, getting one a round to the Oscar Wilde observation that the one thing worse than being talked about is no being mentioned. Smile.

Dereatha returned to the post and pan department this morning. I'm glad to be back in the old dining routine. Whether the lady across the fence returned or not, I cannot say. She had not at the 9 o'clock coffee hour.

About that time, I was on the back gallery giving some directions to helpers when I heard someone walking inside the house. I was amazed to discover it was that mildly lunatic Richard Brailley, Ord, exercising his unmanly will, hillyisms by not bothering to knock. It didn't take me long to get rid of him.

I shall present the little Calude Lorraine to the lady next door I think, for I rigged up an elegant copper pot atop a four foot old metal pedestal in the center of the circle in the Ghana garden today and its ancient appearance a shiny metal glinting in the sun is much more harmonious with the Ghana cabin in the background.

I enclose today's note from Britney which speaks for itself. Miss Dermen would sweep Uncle Tom under the rug even as I would sweep aside some of her microscopic plants which fascinate her so much and interest me, without a microscope, not at all.

Carmen called me today from her office. She said King Solomon's wife had just been in to see if the Red Cross could get a five day extension for her husband before he returned to Camp Sherman, Illinois. The five day extension was granted but his doctor says he can return to camp only by air as he is so badly out of the Sunday evening scuffle at the local honkey-tonk. Poor Zelma... it's this new worry a blessing in disguise to help her radiate the tremendous depression she was in about her husband's death.

Carmen went on to say: "Well, how did you like your Sunday afternoon visitors," and seemed quite taken aback when I responded promptly with firmness that I was thoroughly provoked about the whole business. But, naturally, she couldn't imagine that primarily my resentment was against her sister for barging along uninvited. And thus a new week gets under way, made the happier by today's post from Lyme.....

10486

18101

Tuesday, April 26th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A lovely summer's day, a little cloudy in the morning but the rains passed us by, after coming as close as Bermuda and the Jovous Coast which got a little over an inch last night. It's cloudy tonight. Perhaps we may get a dab eventually.

This morning at dawning, I got half a dozen men, not one of whom could tell the difference between a dandy lion and a dahlia, but I never reject assistance for even though it means I must point out that day lilies shouldn't be hoed up and bamboo should, I realize that cotton will shortly be claiming everyone, leaving the weeds exclusively to me and I might as well do what I can with the uninitiated even though it means I must labor six times harder than the man with the hoe in saving what is worth while and getting rid of the unwanted stuff.

Unfortunately, to the first on-slaught was added a couple of carpenters, Alvin's papa and Clement, and I got them busy finishing the bird houses they had begun too many weeks back. When finished they were quite spiffy, sort of replicas of ante bellum mansions. The one had two apartments in it, the other had four. The four apartment was finally elevated to the one pole between the Ghana and gourd garden, the second will go on the other pole in the same line on the morrow. I coffee-ed across the fence this morning. Celeste was beaming with delight over the pleasures of the past week end. As I listened, I found myself recalling how Miss Cammie used to say how she envied women who could forget all their troubles simply by going to town and purchasing a new hat. Obviously this past week end was equal to one of the more successful hat buying sprees and the world looked as bright as a dollar.

The grapevine reported quite a lot of buzzing last night over an episode in which I figured yesterday morning. It changed that Mitchell, the case, and I entered the kitchen Monday mornin at the same time, he bearing provisions to deliver to Dereatha, I to deliver myself to the dining room. I hadn't realized Dereatha was back until I stepped in and the sight of her return in good health made me so delighted, I threw aside my arms and gave her a big hug. How Mitchell handled the reunion I know not but I gather he set the tale adrift as an eye witness to a white gentleman making love to a colored suellion or some such and I got a great



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great kick out of the grapevine version. What with so much scuffling going on around the country racially, it seems quite unheroic to hear that I could be enchanted to see an old friend after a month's absence in a hospital.

Carmen called me this morning to report that my friend, King Solomon, was in her papers again. The Army had communicated with the Red Cross to report on the Solomon condition. A call to his doctor revealed that the aforesaid Solomon was being transferred this morning to Barksdale Defense Base Hospital and the Red Cross recommended Camp Sheridan, Illinois, communicate with the hospital direct. It is said K. Solomon, Esquire, is going to make it alright but has lost a great deal of blood. Where Henkle Capps, the carver, is hiding, I know not. As both have served as secretaries, I am especially interested in this latest fandango.

Today's post was thin. I am wondering if the writer of the enclosed card has yet learned to spell my name. I forget to ask my helper this evening. The girl who plants she is referring to is the Devil Lily.

I can't recall if it was late in December of last year or early in January of this year that I advised Ola Mae on at least three occasions that I had need of Cane River note paper. I recall on one occasion she acknowledged this request and said she would send it or deliver it or some such. What with May just in the offing, a season when demands for such stuff are brisk, I am vaguely annoyed at her business methods or lack thereof. I have always received an invoice with each shipment and paid it on the same day of its receipt as it can't be my only credit is too bad. I did send her a couple of hundred dollars a couple of months back covering Calico Cook Books, too, and enclosed a brief message about something or other but forget what. In any event, I have never heard from her in regard to that transaction either. She must be as busy as the Recket and just as incapable of following through on business potentials, even as behind once invited me to listen in vain tonight for Invitations I found to Learning but again it wasn't broadcast. I find such a commentary on our times, probably any old time, that people thirsting for knowledge can get only beegay-beegay or prayer rags. I hope to have the Reading Machine back in a day or two and that will be a vast help

10488

10488

Wednesday, April 27th, 1960.

Memorandum: A lovely, cloudless day with the sky the darkest Mediterranean blue. I ever saw in this hemisphere.

I have developed the habit of feeding Dot and companions about the time the first gray of dawn heralds the tapering off of night but I never seem early enough to get ahead of that trio. Whether they head out for a stroll in the dew before the night has started to wane or not, I cannot say since it would take an owl to discover that point.

The guineas are still incarcerated and will remain so until about Friday evening along about dusk dark when I shall set them at liberty where the peacocks

like to gather at dusk dark. Since guineas seem to have to have to attach themselves to some feathered friends, I assume they may find the habits of the birds more to their liking than the constant aquatic performances of Emmet and Erwin.

I almost felt a column coming on this evening but I guess the threat has passed. About six o'clock this morning, four gentlemen arrived, intent on shingling some little out buildings, before which they were supposed to elevate the martin's house they had forgotten to put up last night. Four men and a ladder and they forget to put up the martin house before they were summoned next door to give a hand to experts who are re-roofing the house across the fence. Tonight the little old martin's house still sits on the same bench it occupied last night and I sent word to the papa of Alton that he or a martin had made his nest in it all day. That information, I think, may inspire some action in the morning before the re-roofing resumes next door. Oddly enough, the house doesn't really need a new roof but since three other expert carpenters have had a go at trying to make the port-a-cochere roof jibe with the main house and failed, this new attempt got under way and for some reason, not clear to anyone, the order went forward to do the whole roof.

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I don't recall if I mentioned receiving an invitation to a reception on Friday when New Orleans entertains the President of France. Naturally I declined but I reckon the Parish will be represented, probably by Carmen's brother, Jacki Durant, brother in law, that is, who is a descendant of old St. Denis.

And speaking of the Cross of Lorraine number remains the same I intended to say some time back that I have to be no doubt little Miss Lee may have found the fleur-de-lis paper weight too cumbersome for convenient use. I asked the Tennessee Chromium Company to make one are the design of a deer knocker but smaller. Apparently it wasn't possible since the paper weight turned out to be the same size as the fleur-de-lis on the knocker which I gave the old Mc Lemesse House this past Christmas. I knew nothing about the Tennessee company except that they are supposed to be writing a letter. I think a smaller paper weight in brass might have a certain appeal in the town where the Quaterze fleur-de-lis banners once flew but for almost a year now I have attempted by various methods to get a letter out of them and all I can get is the merchandise referred to above. Perhaps Tennessee is some business kin to one Advertising Mart and doesn't believe in business correspondence although, I must say, this seems like a curious slant for both parties. The vergerons I started from a couple of years ago last year seem to be thriving mightily and they have spread into a carpet of red and blue-purple flowers about 3 or 4 feet around the old wash pot at Ghana and are as pretty as four different colors. During the past two days have come to ask if they might have a spring to start a patch of their own and naturally I am delighted to share with them. I have a little as I contemplate the doings of the sunflower seeds I planted about the time the vegetables were going into the ground as seed, for while the seeds are still languishing in seed form in the vegetable section, the sunflowers are already up 6 or 8 inches. Every seed planted today, they are so thick. If Nature should turn a trick and produce a sunflower 4 or 5 feet across as it did once for me long ago, I shall be convinced I ought to stick to sunflowers and let the vegetables take care of themselves. And now for a dab of desk work and then for a dab of sleep before it's time to try to get ahead of Dot and associates.....

10490

10490

Thursday, April 28th, 1960.

Memorandum: This is a memorandum of the conversation between me and J. H. Watson on Thursday, April 28th, 1960. A perfect summer's day.

My bird house sits on the bench and none of its apartments have been taken although I must confess I did see a couple of martins looking interestedly in its direction today. J. H. and Cousin Arthur Watson went to Baton Rouge this morning and what the occasion was I don't know but the pre-legislative gatherings are beginning to assemble and perhaps bills are being formulated. It is said that during the last Jimmy Davis governorship, no bills were signed until he called Cousin Arthur. Perhaps Cousin Arthur is planning to run the State again. At coffee this morning, Celeste remarked that J. H. wouldn't be home tonight until 8 or 9 o'clock. I had no way of knowing if it was a hint but whether it was or not, I did not tell myself even to spend the evening. When I come to the close of a day that begins at 5 o'clock and ends about 6:30, I feel that under usual circumstances, I am entitled to the balance of the waking hours to my desk work. I do not propose to undertake companionship across the fence between dusk dark and whenever. One thing is certain, I shall not be spending any time making use of my reading machine right away for Hatchiteches reports the motor in mine has gone dead and that means I shall have to send the thing back to Baton Rouge for repairs, and the Lord alone knows how long I shall be without its services. If the business follows the usual pattern, the machine will be repaired and sent back in perfect condition by express or parcel post and after it has been hauled about by common carrier, it will arrive out of commission and then it will have to go back again. I shall be without it for some time.



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and around and around and around although, if I do get a new meter, perhaps I shall be able to have whatever is broken by common carrier replaced in Hatchiteches radio repair shop.

The post brought the enclosures from The Bluff today. It sounds like the girls are having quite a fine time. I am impressed by the fact that neither lady mentioned anything about plans for the immediate future. One assumes Irma may be thinking of getting back to her new trio of daughters in Hollywood but that is only an assumption. Irma doesn't write often but often when she does, her letters are worth reading. I was vaguely disappointed tonight about supper time. I worked with Mitchell, the boy, and Murphy, my gardening helper on occasion, to get in several hundred feet of corn a few thousand feet of corn seeds which Ora sent me. Mitchell had to go to help her with supper and its serving and Murphy and I worked on and finished the planting before the supper bell tapped. Murphy had a lot of watering to do and so I took gardening tools to Yucca and he hoped to get the sprinkling done before quitting time. On reaching Yucca, I decided it would be a little more civilized if I washed up a bit and wash up I did, even though I might be late to break bread with the clerk. As I left my bath and moved to my house, I noticed an unaccustomed shadow in my dining room. I stepped in to find Murphy investigating some packages of garden seeds. It was unthinkable to see Murphy inside my dwelling. He fumbled and faltered and I said I knew he must need some seeds for his own garden and that I thought I had offered him things of everything I had and that I hoped he would go ahead and cast about for anything he required and flew out before he could think what to say or do. I thought somebody had been extracting cabbage and tomato plants from my garden and I expected a raid on the seed section of which I have ample supply. I am delighted to share with poor Murphy and his 15 head of children who undoubtedly needs vegetables for eating and not for decor as is my case. Poor Murphy who has nothing much by way of life except 15 "head of children".

And so the corn is planted and I'm planning another decorative note for Ghana but I must go into that at a subsequent sitting.

00401

10492

Friday, April 29th, 1960.

Memorandum: I am sure you will find this interesting. Well, we finally got our rain and a mighty pretty one it was, too. It was cloudy all morning and at 12:40, the Shreveport Weather Bureau announced rain from 2 to 8 p.m. across that area. It began raining here at 2, a gentle business. Around 6:30 it was still raining gently when a brisk wind stirred things around a little, a flare of burnt orange came from the Montrose Hills behind which the sun had already set and now, at 8, the earth is dapp with about three quarters of an inch of moisture and the clouds are scattering. We are promised a mild, fair weekend. At long last, the vegetable seeds ought to get going. Ora called this morning about 8:15. She said she would like to run down with some of the material she has in mind using. I welcomed the prospect and urged her to do so. I also asked her to bring some paint for I want the artist to do me a picture of some kind or other. She certainly has some interesting diaries, family trees, plantation maps and so on. I looked up some of the 1860 and 1861 newspaper material covering both Hatchiteches and Hatcher and suggested she do some more. She had some excerpts from a little volume by one Flynn, a Massachusetts private in the Banks campaign and there are several references to the Red River doings. I suggested I should be glad to lend a hand in compiling an article for the Shreveport Times and that she should sign it under her name so that the by line may serve her in the future for dealings with literary agents and such like. Dr. Albion was down from the U. S. Pecan Experiment Station and lingered for lunch. He had been inspecting trees all morning and reported a good crop forming and opines, excusing in accidents along the way, the promise for the harvest in November altogether excellent. A flock of ladies appeared on my gallery about 1:30 unannounced. They are from Beaumont and environs and hoped to buy iris bulbs, which leader led me to conclude they didn't know much about iris since iris doesn't grow from bulbs. But they



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were very pleasant and although I did not invite them into  
Yucca, I showed them the African House which some of them found  
interesting. One lady mentioned knowing the Deutscher-Starks, the  
Kleisers, and so on. They all plan to return for October Pilgrimage.

I got pretty soaked before the ladies were on their way. The  
rained knocked off a further laboring today on the roof across the fence  
and tossed some of the carpenters in my direction and I could use  
them for I wanted the Unicorn leg cabin measured at the East end, giving  
on the Ghana garden and had them cut a triangular board about  
2 feet 2 inches in length at the base and 36 inches in height. This I shall  
fit at the end of the building, just beneath the pointed roof and  
I shall have the artist paint a pretty picture on same so that people  
leaving the Ghana garden will always have a parting glimpse of  
a Cane River primitive.

Although I didn't mention bird house, the carpenters without  
asking me installed it in its proper place on the pole and  
did some other odds and ends. Mitchell, the axe, and Murphy  
had ostensibly been hoeing when the rains came. Murphy, without  
saying anything to me, vanished toward home, asking Mitchell to  
tell me of his departure. I guess Murphy is a little shame-  
faced about yesterday for I had work around Yucca for him to have  
performed, had he cared to finish out the afternoon. I set  
Mitchell to polishing copper and I got my reading machine, which  
I had neglected this morning, to the Post Office so it may  
be on its way to the BatenRuge office for repair.

Celeste was a bubbling this morning as Ora had been on the  
wire for both had gone to see the Ramsey production of  
the Hedges Gardens and Cane River country and both were entranced  
at its beauty. Carmen called me early this morning, too,  
wanting to tell me how delighted everyone had been with the showing.  
It was given in town without charge by one of the local theatres,  
perhaps two of them. Ora said the managers of both said that  
if the thing were transferred to another size film, he felt  
or they felt it would be welcomed by managers all over the  
country as regular program material that would prove  
infinitely popular with audiences all around the country.

Tonight about dusk dark I opened the door of the guinea's  
coop and for the first time in almost a week they stepped out for  
some corn and then, casually enough went right back. It  
is nice to know they felt no impulse to scurry off into the weeds.....

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be established with her, if there were other points not covered  
by my letter. I sent this to James, together with  
the original Baldrige letter and James may use it or not  
as he pleases.

I was quite delighted today when I learned that the  
Catholic Daughters have undertaken a project to restore the old  
Seminary building in town that is part of the Bishops  
menage in the heart of town. It is a charming old building and  
perhaps may have been the Bishop's carriage house in early times  
but got its name of Seminary when, in 1854, Bishop Martin,  
returning from Rome, brought three young priests and 8  
seminarians with him and here they were lodged and their education  
completed. The Catholic Daughters are giving a fund-  
raising dinner at the Country Club on June 23rd and thought  
it quite nice of them to invite me to be guest speaker. I  
declined, in spite of much persistency on their part. I shall  
do something else for their cause, in fact, I already  
have done a couple of things since they phoned but  
with things so unsettled here at the moment and my own  
inclination to attend to my own knitting and not  
go tramping around the country, it seems to me  
my choice was a good one, especially for my own convenience.

The first zinnia blossom of the season, a yellow one, has  
unfolded in the circle of the Ghana garden and I found  
along gourd, hidden among the sunflowers, that is as  
big as a fat grapefruit which seems to be rushing the season  
a little. The place continues supplying both the big house and  
the place across the fence with vegetables daily, -- much  
to everyone's satisfaction, for a wonder.

I kept awake long enough last night to do a little  
reading, and, having finished Samuel Pepys, went back  
to the biography of John Paul Jones by Morrison.  
The biography is perhaps more of a thesis than a popular  
presentation but, in spite of occasional data that  
seems a little dull, is informative and to my liking.

And so May gives way to June and may it be just right  
in Lyme.....



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coop and for the first time in almost a week they stepped out for  
some corn and then, casually enough went right back. It  
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Sunday, May 1st, 1960.

Memorandum: A perfectly beautiful week end, what with the sunshine dazzling  
and the temperature in the 70's, too cold for the half hundred  
tomato plants I set out Saturday afternoon but so beautiful one can't  
complain of the plant life if there had to be some sacrifice for beauty's

At 12 o'clock noon on Saturday, Mr. Harrison of Shreveport, brother  
of B. Randolph, appeared, bearing a bottle of wine and saying he had some  
at the gate if he might come in. As the Rands and the Randolph's are frie  
I said O. K. but didn't like it much. The first thing one lady had to do  
was go to the bathroom. Another said she wanted to, too. They all  
had to go and this bathroom business, to start off a tour of ye olde  
plantation, is a nerve, I think. There were other  
pilgrims during the afternoon but I forget all but Luther Harrison and hi  
party. Phillet had been sent to get dressed about 11 o'clock and  
called me about 7 this morning and said some friend of his  
wanted to come down about 9. I said that would be fine. About 8  
o'clock the Louisiana Motel called, saying they had people from  
Bayou Grosse Terre and wondered if they might come with the other  
people who had just called Mr. Henry. I said I didn't care.  
The Louisiana owner then said that perhaps Carolyn and Ola Mae would  
get in touch with me, perhaps in fact they were on their way down as they  
had passed the night at the motel. They had gone out for breakfast at th  
moment. Twenty minutes later Carolyn called. Perhaps the motel had  
mentioned I knew of their presence in town. Carolyn said she had  
seen you recently and that you looked just as lovely as always.  
She said she would be returning to New York on May 16th, or would  
be back in New York on the 16th. She said she was going to show a film there, she said. She said she  
returns to Peru in July for more pictures. I suggested a couple  
of ideas. She seemed entranced. She had said a minute before she had to  
hurry on to Shreveport for a day of desk work but when I dropped an  
idea or two, she said she thought she would do well to run down here inst  
I told her that my morning and afternoon were filled with appointments.  
said she would try to get back this way in about 10 days before running u  
New York. Her next question was out of order, it seems to me.  
Knowing as you and I do from Sayrah that Carolyn has been in  
Baton Rouge recently, she asked me if there was any news of the  
.... Regis. I certainly think she should have phoned them  
while she was there in view of all that has gone before.



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I guess I ran off the page. She told me things about Peru but I had to interrupt her because my appointment people had arrived and that was that

During the afternoon, I had appointments with people from New York and San Francisco which I enjoyed and before they left, Pat and Juanita B. came with child and friends and as they headed out some friends of Farley O'Brien arrived and before they departed some other people until it was time for me to skip across the fence for supper.

John Wenk was here for supper but did not stay. Something is cooking in Shreveport but I know not what. The General and wife came up this evening and will remain here tonight when the General and J. H. will go on to Shreveport to attend to whatever is cooking and that should supply some interesting material.

Blythe stopped at the house across the fence about 11, leaving a fancy desert for that house and telling Celeste to say to me when I came to dine at 11:30 that she would love to have me come and dine with her and her guests at the camp. Naturally I did not go. If Blythe gets as near Yucca as the house across the fence, she can issue her own invitations to me if she really expects me to accept them.

In the basse-cour section, it is pleasant to report that the guineas seem satisfied with their new home and have quitted Emmet and Erwin for Det and a couple of Dashes. The peacocks, on the way, are beginning to manifest some individual characteristics which amuse me. One of them has to do with entering the enclosure at the end of this house, enclosed by a fence about five feet in height. They were in front of Yucca early this morning and when I went to feed them in their enclosure at the west end of the house, I opened the gate for their convenience. The two Dashes, scooted through, knowing breakfast was in store. Det, however, didn't bother with the gate but simply, and without any fanfare, went to whatever, simply took one big hop slap over the fence with all the ease and grace as though merely taking a step forward. The guineas seemed a little startled by such carryings-on but I reckon they will get used to it all soon enough.

And now I must begin my Sabbath mail so that Miss Kate, Aunt Willie and all the rest will not be disappointed. A Million things to do a midnight just around the corner.

10496

10496

Monday, May 2nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Clear and a little too cool for things to grow much at night, what with the temperature in the lower 50's but sunshiny enough in the daytime to make the thermometer rise to the 70's.

A letter from James which I haven't finished reading starts off by saying that in the May issue of Holliday, page 94, as I recall, Lucien Beebe writes about snobbery or snobs or some such and has something to say about Lyle. I had to put aside secretarial assistance at that point for people but I believe he quotes several sentences, possibly paragraphs, about Lyle.

I remember Lyle used to talk about Lucien Beebe, a person who was supposed to be gold loaded who used to call on Lyle occasionally in New Orleans. As I recall, Lyle liked him alright but not more than just alright but thought him sufficiently powerful to merit consideration because he could swing things Lyle might sometime want swung.

I shall be interested to learn if he, Beebe, cites Lyle as a snob. I think of Lyle in many roles, some remarkably good, sometimes bad but never do I think of him as a snob. He had the ability and the will to flatten snobs and I know not if Beebe was one or not and I doubt if Lyle ever stepped on him. Eventually I must pursue the letter further which probably does all the quoting from the article that has to do with Lyle.

This morning I not only got stirring before Det and the Dashes were out of bed but I also discovered where they sleep, -- on the bamboo trellis at the west end of Yucca. The two Dashes seemed in a hurry to jump out of bed or off their perch, if one prefers, as soon as I appeared with their breakfast menu, but Det was more leisurely about his stirring himself. After perhaps half a minute of surveying the old world in the new dawn, he simply hopped up into the air about six inches, settling straight down, his wings spread wide but flapping not at all. In spite of the spreading of the wings, he didn't glide down to a landing but simply settled down as a helicopter might do, tilting his wings, I suppose, in a manner that permitted direct vertical descent with nothing horizontal about his approach to the ground. It was all very pleasant, and I'm going to try to catch him sneezing tomorrow at dawning.



00101

10497

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The General came to see me about 8 this morning, bringing me a neat little present of a raincoat of the watered silk variety that can be folded up to fit into a little envelope. I noticed later, or was told later that he had brought one to J. H., when Celeste showed it to me but I did not refer to a parallel gift I had received an hour earlier.

The General and J. H. left just after 8 for Shreveport to see about what can be salvaged there. -- Sister's psychopathic condition and John Wenk's propensity for piling up stacks of books at home, lifted from drug stores, college and the like. The General told me he thought the dual problems serious. I told him I thought Sister's present marital difficulties stemmed from her jealousy of her husband for receiving more attention and sympathy than she had been getting.

I conferred with the artist at 9:30, discussing the outside mural for the unicorn house, giving on the Ghana garden and dragged the triangular board to her house for her, along with some painting materials. The base of the triangle on which the mural will be painted is only 7 feet 4 inches and I suppose she is probably painting like mad at it right now, for she always dashes things off too fast and especially if Old Age Pension checks have provided "inspiration" from the henkey-tenk.

Celeste visited the big house at 11:15. I am told and caused quite a flurry in the kitchen where Doreatha and Mitchell were preparing dinner. Sad will be the day for those requiring domestic service, as we do at the big house, when color can counter white, explosion for explosion. I had had to two straw covered

At a little after 1, Randy and a boy friend appeared, Randy being Carolyn's secretary who attended the Film Conference or whatever in New York about a year ago. It showed them the Ghana development but did not ask them to sit down as I had 3 o'clock appointments with some friends of Celeste who remained until 5. At coffee this morning, Celeste mentioned that Dan's wife, June, had written her from Alexandria that two ladies, one of whom has a husband for whom June works, had written asking if the two ladies might have a tour on the morrow.

J. H. appeared at supper. The General and wife did not so I assume they are remaining in Shreveport. As Dan was a supper, I asked not a word about today's jaunt northward but shall learn all on the morrow.....

00101

10498

Tuesday, May 3rd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Lovely is the weather, with the morning temperature precisely that of Lyme although Baton Rouge was one degree cooler.

Tonight I spent the twilight hour for the first time at Ghana. It's the hour when I usually get the major portion of my news broadcasts and I got them all tonight, plus a farewell diatribe by Governor Long, set forth as a sort of swan song affair in anticipation of the ending of his term on next Tuesday.

And, of course, as you have anticipated long before this third paragraph, I was ble to sit out of doors on a bench at Ghana and listen to the news because my birthday gift came in today's post, traveling in perfect condition because it was so neatly wrapped.

All I want to say is that I just love the gift, not only for the grand effigy which it is but even more because of what it is by way of affection from the one whence it cometh.

I had heard of these latest miracles of the Scientific Age but had never had one to hand before. I know not why but I had always assumed that they were primarily concerned almost exclusively with stations in the immediate neighborhood but it chanced that the first station I encountered, -- the dial happened to be set on it, was WWL, the CBS affiliate of New Orleans, on which I always try to get the World Tonight at 7 p.m. And tonight I got it just as clear as a bell. And after I had listened to it for five minutes, the machine being in my lap, I plugged in the ear-phone connection, and heard the same broadcast just as distinctly as on the machine without the ear phone.

The case is so handy for me to make use of when heading out for Ghana or where ever and you may be sure that next Sunday morning I shall at long last be doing what I want to do, sit in the quiet of Ghana for an early morning newscast for which I have always had to hurry back to Yucca on Sabbath mornings, for I enjoy the quiet of Sunday morning at Ghana while the plantation does and only Grandpa who invariably follows me, and I are there to commune by telepathy with God and little Miss Lee.



88101

10499

The morning post also brought me the dandy letter of Friday, together with the clippings so thoughtful enclosed and I loved every word letter and enclosure. All in all, it has been among the happier birthdays I can remember and just to think I shall be reminded of it and the one who made it so, --but how many times each day in the season ahead.

At the coffee hour, I found my hostess in bed, nursing a cold and a bad. She said her husband had seemed displeased with her last night since he had remarked that she had almost done the big house out of a cook by her performance of yesterday. She explained to me that the cook had been "ugly" to her when she had visited the big house. She didn't say anything about what she herself had done to be-get ugliness. In short, as so often, the little girl was feeling sorry for herself.

She read me the letter from Dan's wife, saying the two ladies would come this morning and told me she had written back to say she would be delighted to serve them coffee. The ladies arrived about 10:30. I was under the big oak. Same Peace came to tell me they were at the store. I asked if there were two and he said there were nine. I asked him to inform the prospective hostess and ask if she wanted to receive nine instead of two. She responded she had a cold and couldn't see them. I accordingly took over full dispensing of hospitality which afforded the guests a measure of pleasure, I guess, but they radiated nothing by way of inspiration so far as I was concerned.

Photographers from town, recommended by Ora, came to see me this afternoon. I gave them some time but suggested they return later this month or early in June. If the pocket sails off southward toward the Andes, I may see what they want to try to do for Warren by way of Ghana, Ghana by way of Warren.

he artist finished a particularly uninspired outside mural for the Unicorn House. Since her virtue as an artist stems from her use of color and since she had used none of the good paints I had provided but unloaded a lot of old no-account stuff on the work, I made her come over and touch it up a bit but she had done a decent job to start with and no tinkering could rescue it although a dab of daubing did brighten it a little and I shall install it regardless even though it will add no laurels to her crown.

The General and wife returned this afternoon. They wanted to visit

10501

10500

Wednesday, May 4th, 1960.

# Memorandum:

Warm and humid without much prospect for a rain which we would all welcome.

A week or two ago, we moved from the winter to the summer dining room. I was accordingly surprised this morning when I discovered Doreatha had moved us back. She explained the General's wife had found the winter dining room more to her liking than the summer one and had made certain suggestions for this morning.

I broke fast at 6:30 and then got a lot of ribbon grass and stuff dug and packed for the Doreatha contingent to take with them for their garden. They arose at 9. I coffee-ed at that hour across the fence. The lady over there was still complaining of her cold and said she didn't intend exposing mother or any one else to it and was determined to remain indoors.

The General and wife left for home between 9:30 and 10. I was pleased to note at noon that Doreatha had moved us back into the summer dining room. I was vaguely surprised to see the merchant planter at table, however, what with his wife determined to remain in purdah. It was explained, however, that somebody phoned her, saying there was a bridge party at the Country Club, -- and you know the rest.

As for myself, I was happy to be astir before Dot, which isn't saying much. I like to stroll through the Ghana garden before sunrise and today I was doubly happy because I had my birthday gift under my arm which enabled me to sit in the Ghana doorway and absorb the scene before me and at the same time listen to the 5 o'clock news. It came through as clear as a bell over a Shreveport station. The association of the giver and the gift is such that I shall forever, when listening to a program, feel that it is being shared which will always make even good news the better.

And speaking of the news, I was interested to note how the radio handled the account of the mock bombing and Civil Defense practice which was held from 8:00 yesterday until midnight, I guess. Theoretically Lake Charles, Shreveport and New Orleans were subjected to air attacks and



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10501

Wednesday, May 4th, 1960

Camp Beauregard at Alexandria short-wave instructions about city evacuations and so on. They arranged the sentences so that the fact that this was merely a war game and not actuality so that these tuning in late wouldn't be frightened. That was yesterday and tonight about 7 o'clock, the artist called me to ask me if I had heard about all these folks that got killed. I hadn't. She said her daughter, Jackie, had been reading the Shreveport Times and it told how everybody in Shreveport had been bombed out. She didn't seem worried about any of her several kinfolk in that area and, naturally, I didn't inquire about their fate. She always has her TV going and so must have heard much of the simulated bombings being reported all afternoon and evening yesterday but, as I have often suspected, probably didn't pay the slightest attention to the news being broadcast. After all, when names of places and people mean nothing to a listener, it seems quite natural the chatter on or over the air means little or nothing and probably is never paid the slightest attention to, even when such dire doings as war games are reported. Of course her report to me recalled the uproar occasioned by the Orson Wells broadcast in the 1930's on the 40's about the arrival of the men from Mars and all the excitement that ensued. Miss Hunter, however, would never be upset by a report about the arrival of the Martians if she heard about it on the TV since she would be perfectly content to wait until the next day to get the news from the Shreveport Times through Jackie.

The Mathes of Escandida, California, sent me a grand big package from their fruit hacienda today, or at least it arrived to day. I find the avocado a pleasant fruit for salads and I only regret that they were all so ripe that they would perish if sent on to Lym to share with little Miss Lee. I shall have a salad tonight before folding up my beard and, in a way, will sort of share it by telepathy regardless.

For two or three weeks now, J. H. has been bringing home fresh strawberries which, I imagine, stem from the neighborhood of Panchatula or Hammond or some place a few miles north of New Orleans. They are very nice but I must confess that I'm inclined to prefer the frozen variety.

It just occurs to me that I have never heard of frozen figs and I'm wondering if that fruit is processed the way everything else seems to be. People like James, Celeste, etc., seem to set such inordinate high store by fresh figs, I should think the frozen variety, if successful as

10502

10502

Thursday, May 5th, 1960

#### Memorandum:

Cloudy, warm and humid to the point of being almost soupy.

I worked a little later than usual last night and even knocked off a column for next week. --The Louliest Racket,-- which was one of those things that isn't premeditated but merely knocked off in desperation to meet a deadline.

There was much electrical doings in the heavens and this, added to the constant clatter of thunder, one expected a downpour every minute. We got a sprinkle of about 10 seconds duration between 9 and 10 but sometime around 2:30 we got about a half inch which delighted everybody.

I wanted to make a little round of the gardens and so be-stirred myself about 4:30. At 4:45, thinking I might get ahead of the two Dashes, I visited their boudoir but they were already up and abroad. Dot, however, was still dozing. He probably had worked all night trying to get the girls to bed in the first place. I offered him a cup of coffee, in a manner of speaking, but from his resting place atop the bamboo trellis, he simply eyes me sleepily and then went back to resting his eyes. At 6:30, having returned from Ghana, radio in pocket, I offered Dot something more substantial by way of toast but Dot wasn't dreaming of moving. At 7 it was the same story but finally, at 8:30, he finally made up his mind to indulge in a dash of breakfast and by then the girls were back to join him. I never tire of seeing them negotiate the fence protecting them from the outside world. The girls are always jumping over it with the greatest of ease, with no effort at all, in fact. Now and then Dot decides on a stroll in the white garden or fancying he sees a fatter bug on the far side of the picket fence, does exactly what the girls do, --just jumps over the five foot barricade and when ready, jumps back again. All three of them can fly with ease and grace but apparently they see no point in doing so when jumping can scale the height. Emmet and Erwin act as though they didn't know they existed and the peacocks never



10503

give the ducks a second glance. The guineas are equally indifferent their feathered neighbors and spend their days strolling over wider courses quite independently. I believe they are sleeping in the little garden by or behind Dr. Miller's cabin and they appear quite tame although they never bother joining the other birds for cracked corn and such like.

Coffee across the fence this morning was a big misere. Nobody understand the problems the lady is forced to experience. The thousand dollar a month hospital bills for mother are something but not so disturbing as the fact that the two sisters never spend any time with their mama and in consequence, my hostess "never" has a chance to play bridge, etc., etc. You can see readily enough how trying life can be.

Celeste is staying in town with Madam Regard tonight, what with J. H. being in New Orleans, both of R. E. A business and, I believe, to attend to his throat which seems better, so far as sound goes.

Just to keep the record straight, I want to report that by today's post I received a few boxes of Cane River note paper. I suppose the invoice which always accompanies deliveries will arrive in tomorrow's post.

I don't know if I mentioned having received an invitation to a wedding in Jackson, Mississippi. My name must have been put on the list by the prospective groom since I never heard of the bride to be. I believe the groom-elect is Mary Landin's younger son of whom I never saw but little and not once, I think, since along about 1940. It was that invitation, of course, that inspired "The Loveliest Pocket".

I was much displeased with the results of the artist's attempt to do a mural for the Unicorn cabin. She came to see me this afternoon and decided to let her have another try.... It seems to me I hadn't quite finished with whatever I was chattering but a telephone interruption from the Enterprise to inquire about some point in the column deprives me of any memory as to where I left off, --even what I was talking about.

Further indirect reports from the Shreveport quarter seem murky enough. It is said John Wink has about a thousand dollars worth of books he "borrowed" from various drug stores and I know no how many from the college library. His mama continues dreaming of a divorce. Their financial outlook is said to be too rosey. New Roads continues as the ideal spot for a dream home. If there must be one, let's hope it may be right there. And now for a dab of

10504

10504

Friday, May 6th, 1960.

Memorandum: I have been thinking about the weather today that we seemed to have a little of everything that Spring could offer. For no particular reason, I arose at a quarter of four and found the electrical display fascinating, a constant flashing, to the second with only occasional rumbles of thunder. It was pleasantly around 70. On second thought, it seemed a little early to get stirring and so I went back to bed until 5:15 when the rain was descending in buckets. It had stopped by 7, after depositing 2 inches that covered half the garden like a lake. I spent most of the morning opening ditches to the river so that the young vegetables wouldn't be drowned and the sun coming out for an hour made everything, including me, steamy. Cloudy this afternoon and then clearing tonight and the moon is wonderful and the temperature in the 50's, --too cold for things to grow but wonderful for sleeping.

The peacock girls must have given Det quite a night for he lingered on his perch until 9:15 this morning. Poor Det, but he seems pert enough when he gets under full sail. I must remember this as one of those days when everything seemed to go just right. One ought to find such memories useful on other days when everything goes into a tangle.

I was especially happy to get an excellent CBS account of the Princess Margaret's wedding. I have only little Miss Lee to thank for that. Although the sky had cleared by 6:45 this evening when the doings were re-broadcast, the static remaining in the air was so intense that I could hear nothing on my Christmas instrument. Without knowing if there would be any difference in reception, I instinctively turned to my birthday portable and to my delight, discovered there was no static at all on it and thus I got the whole pageant which I found altogether to my liking. If you felt benedictional crackling in the air, you may readily guess whence they issued.

I was much pleased this mid morning when the postman brought me a new reading machine which I have been waiting for. It is a little different from the one I had before but I am sure it will be a good one.



10501

10505

10501, 10505, 10506

brought me a new reading machine which appears quite  
spiffy although I have merely tried it to see if I had  
sense enough to get it rigged up properly and, to

my surprise, I discovered I had. I hope to sample it  
a little tonight. The artist phoned me in mid afternoon, asking if I should  
like to drop by her house to see how the second try on the Unicorn  
mural was progressing. I did make an effort and I was  
pleased with the efforts and I think she was, too. She did  
a big Bertha-Bluff, about 2 or 2 and a half feet tall in a red-red  
dress, in the middle of the triangle, a little switch in her hand,  
swishing at a little white and black turkey, his tail in full spre  
Some geese and other poultry continue on toward the point of the  
triangle at the right. With his back to Bertha-Bluff,  
saddling a white mule, is that tall boy of Hina's, Carlton Brown.  
Some more poultry trail off toward the point of the triangle  
at the left. The artist called me again about five and  
said I could have the picture tonight if I wanted it as she  
had only five minutes more of work to put on it. I lied and  
said I was all tied up and couldn't make a round until  
tomorrow morning which suited her alright. My thought was that  
if pressed for time, she would succeed in botching up the thing at  
last minute and it was better to leave it in her true hand  
tonight when she will probably work on it more leisurely, --if  
she doesn't get lost in Friday night fire water.

The whole composition is so simple that it is childish and ju  
right in feeling a perfect in brave coloring to suit the little ad  
Unicorn leg cabin providing as it will, just the proper ex  
plosion of color to gladden the hearts of everyone departing from  
Ghana since it can be seen from afar and will naturally attract  
the eye of the departing guest. The artist  
A large, suit-shaped package from the Baton Rouge Shirt Shop  
came to hand from James and Kay. Undoubtedly it is clothing and s  
I did not open it but will hold against the morrow,  
what with a flock of minor matters claiming my attention  
all day and more awaiting me. The lady next door I never did  
see today as she had not returned here from town where she  
spent last night. I suppose H. will be home tonight, after hav  
seen his doctor today. I held the thought all is on the mend there  
And so runeth out a happy day and may it have been as happy in Lym

10501

10506

Sunday, May 8th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Two of the loveliest days one could imagine, all cool and blue and gold.

Saturday was particularly nice because it brought news from  
Lyme to set just the right tone for the week end although some of the  
information it contained made me wish things in that area had been  
a little more conclusively smoothed out and that antique baby sitting  
didn't have to be considered in the days ahead.

I am especially grateful for the particulars shared concerning the  
last word, which is the limit. -- I can see no excuse whatsoever for such  
a bungle on the part of Ola Mae. As a matter of fact, it is so far  
outside the realm in which little Miss Lee and Lestan operate that it is  
just about impossible to conceive as existing among people claiming  
our acquaintance. -- What strikes me as especially inordinate is  
the fact that it was done by a lady supposedly a business executive.  
Some scatter-brained social butterfly might have been guilty but, of all  
people, one engaged in business doing such a thing is quite beyond  
anything I ever could have imagined.

Long ago I gave up trying to keep anything straight  
in that quarter. In strictest business regularity, an invoice has  
come from the Advertising Mart with the delivery of every box of  
note paper and I have always made it a point to pay for  
said merchandise by the next mail. I am always billed one to  
dollar net per box which is the regular net charge and as my only  
opportunity for sales is to dealers, such as the Village Shop in  
Alexandria, or some of the stores in town, I never make a penny on  
such transactions except for a supposed dividend on the author's  
rights. Once I go a check for \$75.00 supposedly on author's  
rights but I was never quite sure about that. If, perhaps, that may  
have covered some of the articles I have done on occasion for Forestry  
and such like publications. There has never been any royalty, so far as  
I know, on the Calico Cook Book but I have paid a couple of  
hundred dollars against books sold, the net price being \$1.20.  
I cannot get a statement, let alone a note about anything from that quarter  
and my payments have been accepted, I have no doubt although I  
have only the receipts of the money order variety as evidence.

One of the strangest ways of doing business transpired a couple  
of years ago. I guess it was, when Ol-Mae passed this way unannounced one  
day with some California friend to whom Ol-Mae wanted to give  
some Hunter creations in the painting section. I had a half dozen on



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hand and was glad to let Ola Mae have them since the artist had nothing at all, and I told Ola Mae she might have them for exactly what I paid for them which was really quite inexpensive in view of their quality and would have been almost a give-away, even had they been below standard. As I recall, Ola Mae had brought some note paper to deliver to me with in voice attached. I sent the money covering that shipment to her on the following day along with a note saying how glad I was to meet her California friend and remarking that the sum of -- whatever it was, -- was just what I had paid the artist and that I was glad Ola Mae had passed this way at just the time they were available. From then until now, I haven't heard a peep out of her about California, pictures or anything. Perhaps the \$75.00 -- author rights, was supposed to cover that transaction of the pictures, too, but, if so, I certainly haven't anything to show for the note-paper dividends. And so I am quite at sea regarding the whole business and don't care if I never get further involved.

The Rocket called from Ola's this morning. See attached memo that I tapped off right after the conversation.

Mrs. Charles Wood telephoned this morning, also, -- from Wichita, Kansas. It was nice hearing her voice and a conversation that was light and gay and not all bogged down in pressing prospects.

Dr. Briere of Shreveport, called this afternoon, asking if he might bring his brother-in-law, also a doctor from Haiti, to chat for a little while. I was delighted. I understand Dr. Briere is building himself a fine property outside Shreveport. It was a rather extensive for he mentioned having planted several thousand pine trees and wanted to ask about books on Versailles for gardening ideas. After looking over the local set-up, we collapsed on the back gallery for a round of wine and I excused myself for a few minutes to look up some point about which Dr. B. had asked. He was hoping to get some banana plants and I said I would find someone to dig them, he was wearing such a pretty suit. And so I dug them and put them in a wheel barrow and it was all achieved -- almost -- before they discovered me. Oddly enough, I never have been able to find the glasses and the bottle which I'm sure they thoughtfully but ill-advisedly, picked up for me instead of leaving it where I would find it in the place it had occupied at the beginning.

10201

10508

Sunday, May 8th, 1960.

emo of conversation with the Rocket:

The Rocket phoned from Ola's house in Shreveport at 10:15.

Brighday greetings, ostensibly or is it ostensibly, was the reason but as other calls have been made on the same date in previous years, combining business with pleasure, so it was today.

There has been in existence since 1945 a Foundation known as International Film Foundation. The Rocket envisions setting up a similar one for the Americas with accent on South American countries.

She is consulting the Smithermans of Shreveport, son in law of J. A. J. Hedges, regarding legal aspects.

She will be in New York on the 16th of May and will see other peop regarding other aspects. She will go to Washington to consult with Senator Johnson of Texas, asking him for political suppose and an introduction of the Board, set up by President Eisenhower for bettering South American relations.

A pep is tossed in my direction in the form of including me on the Board of the Foundation, in what capacity not even God could imagine. In the mean time, I am asked to supply some material regarding South America as a "come-on" prospectus to be presented to the Federal Government.

I hope you are sitting down as you read the balance of this sentence: -- Ola Mae would be made Executive Director, the Rocket Production Director. In the midst of that, I told the Rocket to tell Ola Mae I got a couple of dozen boxes of note paper but no invoice. Somehow such an ingredient, tossed into the President of the United States, the Speak of the Senate and so on seemed to be just about as foolish as Ola Mae as an Executive Director of anything.

.....



10208

10509

How the conversation lasted a half hour, I knew not but  
so it did.

The ticket said she would be flying back to New Orleans  
in the morning. I suggested she wave as she passed  
over the river. She asked me if I would write her  
in New Orleans, passing along the information mentioned above.

I responded that writing her and Ola Mae was futile and  
that she had better telephone me from the Crescent City or drop in  
sometime. I went on to say that it was obvious that if she  
didn't stay put long enough in one place to receive mail,  
it was impossible to imagine her possessed of enough time  
to read anything, should, through error, an epistle ever reached her.  
She coughed on that a little and said she would phone. My  
point is that in my role as peacock minder, guinea minder, duck  
minder, vegetable minder and discontented spouse minder,  
I had plenty to do in hanging a typewriter without  
mocking off stuff that would never be read.

I asked where the money was coming from to set up the Inter-American  
Foundation. She thought Governments, Pan-American  
Societies and the like might be helpful. I suggested United Fruit, Sta  
oil, Guggenheim mining interests, etc., etc., might be helpful.

What she wants is a Foundation with enough money to pay  
large salaries, enabling her and her associates to  
produce films and publications without being too much  
pinched for income, -- a laudable aspiration, but,  
with such directors, something difficult to imagine. I  
must confess I think she would really like to make a flock of  
films and I know they would be excellent but I shall have  
to have more evidence than that to hand if I am to be convinced  
that there is sufficient business acumen handy to effect anything that  
would function successfully.

She cited the fact that International Film Foundation has  
done a film on Spain that has already paid for itself  
and produced a profit to the Foundation of a hundred thousand  
dollars during the past twelve months. I think she is producing some  
beautiful things but it's a long way from the aspiration for  
financial security and realization of same.

10211

10510

Monday, May 9th, 1960

Memorandum:

A perfectly lovely summer's day.

There was happiness all around, through which shone and  
fused such a precious glow of warmth that came from Lyme  
via the post in the sweetest message on one of the leveller  
cards anyone could imagine.

It was so pleasant to realize that on the 6th while  
I was relishing my day so much, little Miss Lee was writing to  
say so many things to make me happy.

The only other piece of mail was from I. S. Willard  
from the Abbey Hotel and I notice a card that came from  
her the other day here on my desk, both of which I shall enclose.  
As a writer of fascinating letters, I. S. Willard doesn't  
seem to shine in this particular effort but perhaps she  
was too busy finding herself in the midst of so much  
activity in the great metropolis.

At coffee this morning I received four very nice  
claret glasses which are both timely and just the right size  
and pleasant of design.

Fortunately, there was a telephone call just as coffee  
was served on the gallery which gave me an opportunity  
to catch my breath for a few minutes for I had been  
quite busy since 4:45 and was glad to pause and sip my  
coffee by myself. I had listened to the 5 a.m. news at Ghana,  
thanks to my grandest birthday present and it was so pleasant to  
pause there for five minutes to drink in the dawn and to send  
messages without end in the direction of Lyme by thought waves.

Today's information that a battery will play about 100  
hours leads me to conclude that I should be having  
service from the machine for a three month stretch at least  
and each morning it will accompany me at dawn in which  
ever direction I head out to meet the new day.

A return to the coffee cups and much complaining  
about the ailing husband's disregard for the wife's  
comfort, coughing at night on his part and so on. We  
.....



10511

had just reached the stage of tears of self pity when another  
'phone call happily intervened and I scooted.

There were quite a few 'phone calls today and tonight,  
including Ora, Mildred Cunningham, Carmen,  
Mrs. Walker, her mother and so on. Carmen and her sister dropped  
in this afternoon with a fine box of delicious little cakes.  
They also brought a package from Thelma Kyser which I haven't opened  
yet. I plan a little supper party of one for about midnight  
when my work shall have been completed, --strawberries, a  
box of which J. H. sent me Saturday which are now all prepared, sug  
and creamed awaiting me in the ice box and some of the Breazeale cak

There was a small party about 8 tonight when  
some of my friends, --gens de couleur, having overheard my 9  
o'clock hostess at the store report the natal day business at  
the store to the clerk and instead of going to the henkey-tenk,  
they had pooled their coppers and invested in ice cream and  
package cookies, all of which, like the portable and mail  
of this morning, made me glad to be alive. Perhaps the  
line of the old song isn't exactly appropriate but whether so or not  
it has been running through my mind all day and all evening:

"So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of  
His heaven."

Word was put out on Saturday that the hoeing of cotton would be  
this day at 6 o'clock but plans were changed,  
the feeling being it was too wet for not only the ladies but  
the gentlemen as well to hoe -- smile -- and so I got  
eight field hands unexpectedly in the flower or vegetable sections,  
not one of the gentlemen knowing the difference between anything  
and a weed. But we got quite a lot done in spite of that although  
I honestly believe I worked harder by about 8 times than any of  
the individual laborers, --just keeping them on the right track.

I marvel at the bungle of the American spy business in Russia.  
It just doesn't seem possible that such contradictory statements  
could be issued officially, indicating that nobody had thought  
through what seems to have been such a fundamental possibility as  
might well have and did indeed transpire.

But I had better not get going on that as I have much  
desk work to undertake and a busy program for the morrow.  
Again my thanks for having made my natal day such a happy one.  
How grateful I am to God and little Miss Lee for little Miss  
Lee and God.....

10512

Tuesday, May 10th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Another perfectly lovely day.

The two girls must have left off reading for a bit  
last night for they and Dot were all awaiting me on the  
front gallery about 5 this morning and, to my surprise,  
all three remained strolling about in front of the house all  
day. Perhaps Dot is getting caught up on his  
sleep.

I found the lady across the fence in a happier  
frame of mind today. She mentioned she was spending  
the day with her girl friends at the Country Club.  
How wonderful are the ways in which happiness  
may be grasped.

I can't recall if I mentioned yesterday  
that J. H. received a card from Sister explaining her  
husband was remaining in Ohio longer than had been  
planned since the seeing eye dog with whom he had been training  
had suffered a nervous breakdown. Lucky dog! And  
what might it have suffered, had it ever reached Shreveport,

It is pleasant, in a way, to be assured at supper tonight  
that the hoe hands will really begin hoeing on  
the morrow for ten were channeled into my domain this  
morning, the majority of them willing enough but none  
of them having the vaguest notion as to where flowers left off and weeds  
we got quite a lot done but it kept me as busy as a chicken on a  
hot griddle, trying to conserve what is to be cultivated and to get rid  
of what should be eradicated.

I was thankful for the services of a couple of carpenters  
in the afternoon.

Among other things I had the undertake was further deers on the U  
cabin, the one giving on the Chana garden where the artist's  
latest picture has just been placed.

The little cabin is only about 7 feet in width which



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makes it easy to handle. The ancient logs of which it is built have weathered a lovely gray with the centuries and I sent the carpenters about the plantation to find another log of about the same state of weathering which they did. Then I had them cut it at each end in the same dove-fashion as the logs making up the cabin and then had this piece of wood, perhaps a couple of inches thick, six or eight inches wide and a little over 7 feet in length installed as a sort of shelf just below the picture and it looked very urdu and harmonious with the whole composition. Then I sent them suorrying about the little cabin itself and other ancient buildings in the neighborhood to find 10 or a dozen old square, hand made nails which then did. These I had driven into the edge of the shelf at about 6 inch intervals, and while the carpenters were casting about in this undertaking, I had a couple of other men making dippers out of gourds of varying shapes and sizes, and snappapering them when finished and then hanging them in a row from the shelf, suspended from the old square nails. And when the whole thing was done, it looked very pretty and I was compensated for all the bother of the flock of non-horticulturally minded helpers.

In the vegetable gardening section, the rows of sprouting things are emerging and I must say the promise of the parterres is pleasant. There were some places that had to be re-planted and these places will be given artificial rainfall that will bring them right into line shortly, along with their older established neighbors.

One wouldn't imagine how difficult it is to plant a Lenore pattern with the type of assistance I have until one had undertaken it. For instance, there are five pie-shaped parterres that converge at the central circle and seven triangles, ge smaller and smaller are brought into being within the outside border of in't's beard. Each triangle is broken before reaching its point at the center, meaning that from the three straight lines making up each of the 7 geometrical figures, two of the up top sides are tied together in an arc to form rings like waves receding from the central circle. Now my assistants cannot conceive of the broken arc joining the two sides of the triangle and unless I am right there to place a finger on a point, they swing the arc to meet anything in their confusion and I go mad trying to stave off from confusion an effort already sufficiently complex. Neither can they conceive a straight line in the sides of the triangle and when they encounter a little rise of ground, three or four inches above the level they are working on, they swing around the little

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Wednesday, May 11th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Except for too high winds and too low temperatures, the day has been lovely and so is tonight.

I was delighted that no field hands came to gum up my labors today. Instead I navigated in comparatively vacant waters while the landscape seethed with little clouds of dust where hundreds of hoe hands were chopping at cotton.

On the 6:30 news tonight, I learned of the death today of the junior John D. Rockefeller. He is one of the remarkable men of our time whom I have admired, not only for his remarkable philanthropy but for the quality of the man himself. Like so many of his contemporary robber barons, old John D. was a bag and all his philanthropies couldn't wash out that fact but John D. the younger never seems to have indulged in the outrageous and how much richer today is society generally for all that the younger John D. could and did help use his father's wealth at first and then his own in contributing in so many ways to the benefit of his fellow citizens.

Ora came down this morning, bringing the Emily Buard diary with her. Sometime before folding up my beard last night, I had written the first few opening paragraphs of a letter or rather an article for the Shreveport Times which she had wanted to undertake to get her name on a by-line in order to cite same as a newspaper contributor when submitting manuscripts to agents. The article will be about a book by Private Flynn of the Massachusetts section of the Banks Army in its Red River campaign. I think these paragraphs will get the article by the Editor's desk and she will extract the details from the 1880 book and we shall try pasting them together one day next week. She brought me some excellent brass and copper polish which I tried out this afternoon. She brought me two elegant pies and some fancy cheese which I shall try out tonight before folding up my beard.



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As for the Buard diary, it isn't very extensive and much of the book, if one is every made of it, cannot expect the diary itself to be much more than a tack on which to hang the story. I think a picture of Natchitoches in the war years could be an entertaining and enlightening volume and I knew not if she will ever attempt it for much of the body of the book will have to be about other people and places than are touched on in the diary. I think at best it is likely to turn out to be a book that will interest members of families mention, perhaps divert few scholars of the period but probably never get a very wide reading. At the moment, my guess is that she will never really attempt it although it will be a pity if she doesn't since nobody else, possessed of so much pertinent documents, will ever try a hand at it. One of the more telling points in Ora's related documents is a letter from the New Orleans cotton merchant handling Buard bales and from it we learn that in the year it is written, -- 1866, -- he has sold many bales for Madame Buard and has only 40 bales left from her current crop and points out that her bills are running very high, -- personal expenditures, one gathers, something like ten thousand dollars for fripperies, which doesn't sound so much like the starving and destitution one things about in some sections of the South in the first year following the cessation of hostilities. The letter names one member of the Deblieux family as being a scoundrel and advising Madame Buard not to accept advice from him. The diarist's family went down wonderfully in later years, the diarist herself having married Emil Cloutier who never gave up the bottle about which she was regretting, -- the use of the bottle, by the aforesaid Cloutier even when he was courting Mlle. B. It is interesting that Lestan Prudhomme is among others mentioned as heading out for the wars in 1861.

The guineas must have thought both yesterday and today to have my birthday all over again for they again produced an egg on each Sunday. They are now quite tame as are the peacocks and it is pleasant to come down the shady path toward the avant-cour and find all five of them, -- guineas and peacocks, sampling bugs and grass immediately in front of Yucca, the gray old cat and the young black tabby and the white ducks making quite a colorful assembly.

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Thursday, May 12th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Clear and cool. In the Shreveport suburb of Barksdale Field, last night's low was 40, the coldest night for this late in the year thus far registered although it was down to 42 or some such in Shreveport in 1903. Needless to say, nothing is growing in the vegetation section although the grandiflora magnolia blossoms are pretty enough. The thermometer gradually crawled up into the 60's but the chopping of weeds from the cotton was suspended on the theory that the tender roots of the plants would be effected if the soil around them were loosened. We are promised a temperature tonight at about the same reading as last night's.

I had to laugh again today when for the second time I heard the same sort of reasoning on the part of the artist that always strikes me as distinctively individualistic. Last week the boss ordered a picture from her but as he had no canvas and no paints, she "borrowed" some from me. I had another piece of canvas the same size and figured I had better have her do me a picture, too, if I hoped to get any of the same paint, -- of a better quality and brightness than she employs when it comes to her through other sources. When she told me it would cost me five bucks to do the picture for me, I pointed out that as I had supplied the materials for the boss and charged her nothing, I couldn't figure out how she would expect me to pay five dollars when she charged him only \$2.75.

Her response was blandness itself and apparently it covered precisely what she believed. "Well, don't you see, the boss ain't got no money because he has to work but you don't have to do nuthin'."

In short, little Miss Hunter is a sight.



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Twenty four hours following the death of John D. Rockefeller, jr., comes an announcement of the death of Ali Kahn. What a lot of material this ought to provide editorial writers. I would be difficult to think of two young men starting off with greater promise of wealth. How differently they responded to the promise.

In the aviary section, Det maintains his inclination to arise long after sun up. His morning at 5, I noticed the girls were already streaking about the white garden before I went to Det's bedroom where I found him gazing languidly at the world from his bamboo perch. The top of my head comes about level with her feet. I chatted with him in subdued tones for a while. He eye-ed my sleepily and said nothing by way of response. I turned on a faucet along the Yucca gallery, thinking the sound of water might impell him to invite him for a drink but it was a couple of hours later before he decided to be-stir himself and although he did take a sip of water, he ignored the fine toast and cracked corn I set out for him which, of course, delighted the blue-jays.

I guess the old dog must have overtaken the female guinea. At any rate, she is looking mighty disreputable and limps a little. All the feathers are gone from her back, somehow suggesting a nun, still possessed of head gear and skirt but without any draperies to cover her arms, shoulders and breasts so that one feels a little shame-faced in looking at her.

After spending the day in Shreveport, J. H. arrived just as we were at supper. He made no reference to his day's business other than the fact that Dr. Went was back with his new dog. I asked if the dog manifested signs of nervousness. He said it had not. I shall hear details of the business transacted on the morrow.

The S. G. Henrys who had left Shreveport at the same time J. H. had headed south, had stopped in Natchitoches to call on Madam Regard and accordingly did not arrive here until after supper. They claim they are leaving for Baton Rouge "early" in the morning. If the cook doesn't think of it, --and far be it from me to remind her, -- about the General's wife finding breakfasting in the summer dining room to rugged an experience.

And now I had better roll up my sleeves and get busy on some overdue letters, after which I want to read a little from Samuel Pepys before having a slab of Or's pie and folding up my beard.....

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Friday, May 13th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Another lovely day and a dab warmer with the promise of more warmth on the morrow.

It was delightful to find such a dandy letter from Lyme, as of Wednesday last past, in today's post.

I was especially interested in what was mentioned about difference in delivery time as between letters and parcel post going from point 1 to point 2 and from point 2 to point one. Since it is bound to be the same distance travel, regardless of point of origin, there must be some hitch along the way in the west east journey. I must say, however, that I still am at a loss to comprehend how the parcel post package could make the journey from east to west in a shorter time than 1st class mail generally does. Perhaps Uncle Sam is sending parcel post by air, although at ordinary rates, in order to increase air company dividends.

In regard to the matter of I. S. Willard, I did

not mean to urge you attempt contact but merely to let you know of her presence in the city so that if an odd breather should develop, you might give the gal a buzz.

If the impulse struck, whenever such data is sent along, always consider it as merely information, to be acted upon or not, as circumstances turn at the moment. I know that

Lestan never tired of getting words of praise about little Miss Lee and probably little Miss Lee enjoys getting reports from acquaintances, too, but nobody better understands than Lestan the billion things that may interpose to prevent the realization of such contact for, as a matter of fact, the locals set u and that at Lyme is forever getting into such a hurly burly that it is only good sense to try to avoid elements that may tend to complicate an already complex environment.

I was so glad the weather was pleasant this morning for Atala Hertzog was coming up from Magnolia for a little stroll with me and I am always glad to see her and chat about her impressions of Washington, her brother, Mat of Magnolia and so on.



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Last night, the S.G.'s had left word to be called at 7 this morning. They arose at 9. This complicated Celeste's plans to run down to Magnolia to pick up Atala but everything finally got straightened around. Atala and I had a nice little tour and she said she wanted to return later when the vegetables were up since she would probably be down again shortly, what with her mama lingering on, as Miss Sally does, senile but still mama. I told her I understood so well and should be so delighted to see her when she made another visit, the current one ending on Sunday.

Imagine my surprise this afternoon when my grapevine of color began making a great racket and I learned that Miss Sally, after an unusually cheerful morning, a quiet luncheon, and simply died.

Great will be the lamentations at Magnolia among Miss Sally's four surviving children which, of course, is perfectly natural. Only respect will dominate the human reactions outside of the immediate family, and more respect for the dead than anything else. After all, Miss Sally for more than 30 years has enjoyed ill health, has insisted that the world revolve about her and exerted herself to do nothing for anyone but herself. In many respects she was a lady, exceedingly polite to everyone on her own social level, careful of her personal appearance and always dressing in the finest, conservative clothes. Her dinners were excellent in point of food and service and her conversation as dull and her treatment of servants on the basis that the latter were somewhat less than human. If I were to cite one thing that perhaps summed up Miss Sally as much as anything, it was what she said to me one day when I had been dining with her and we had retired to the front gallery for coffee. She noticed an occasional automobile passing in the road, several hundred yards from the gallery. When she asked me if I knew where "all these cars" were going and I had replied that I hadn't the slightest idea, she had declared:

"Why, of course, they are all going to Melrose, just as they all do, and I cannot see why. After all, Magnolia is much larger than Melrose....."

I agreed as how it was and much newer, too, having been re-built in 1904. Nothing I ever said pleased her so much.

And so another day and so my jeli transistor continues operat

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Dark Duke's death

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Sunday, May 15th, 1960.

Memorandum: Cloudy and pleasantly warm with a promise of the same sort of thing for the morrow. On Saturday afternoon I saw something more ridiculous than I can ever remember and I only regretted little Miss Lee was present to join in the hilarity. He decided he was going to show the world what a fine fellow he really is and began putting on an act for me in front of Yucca. Letting his wings sag a little and cocking his crowned head at a fancy angle, he elevated his tail and began strutting about at a great rate. He certainly would have made an impressive picture, had it not been for the fact that just about one half his tail was gone but the absence thereof made all his marching up and down and a round seem as mirthful as anything I ever remember witnessing and I'm still laughing every time I recall the silly figure thus presented.

At this close of the week end, in the Cane River country, it must be allowed that the Hertzeg interlude just about dominated the activities of most of the neighbors, except me, who settled by sending flowers and that was all.

Miss Sally, never liking plantation life although a resident of Magnolia for 60 years or more, made no dent on the Parish public mind. On two occasions this week end, I have heard elders of this region remark they had heard that "Mr. Mat's mama done died", but that was all.

She died about 2:30 on Friday afternoon and within the hour had been taken to Alexandria. A High Mass was said for her there on Saturday morning, J. H. and Celeste attending, and her funeral was held this afternoon, J. H. and Celeste attending. She was buried at Pineville, across the river from Alexandria.

In pondering on her life and her death, I came up with the notion that, for all I know, God may apportion a certain amount of concern for every mortal, to be used up in a variety of ways, but with a definite limit set on the amount of concern to be expended, there isn't much left for the public to pass around



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if the individual himself has expended the entire supply on himself himself and that, in a manner of speaking, was the way in Miss Sally case, it seems to me I don't recall ever having heard anybody say he disliked Miss Sally and yet, by the same token, I don't remember having ever heard anyone manifest any affection for her except on the part of her two sons, one of whom, at least, and possibly two, were wrapped up in mama's whims than with the consideration for their wives so that nobody would expect much emotion other than relief from that quarter. The pebble, resting a lifetime on the margin of the pool of life, finally slipped out of sight beneath its surface and there wasn't so much as a ripple.

Returning to the peacocks, I want to respond to your question about the facilities they enjoy against inclement weather. Before they arrived, I built them a fine shed, open at the east but closed on the west and north to protect them from the winds and the rains, and doubly protected, thanks to its position, at the far end of the pool at the west end of Yucca where the hedges and trees give additional guarantee against the west and north winds. I installed a fine perch, about four feet off the ground, high enough to protect them from roving animals and far enough from the ground to enable their tails to hang down without touching the ground. They took one look at the thing on their arrival and re-acted exactly as Emmet and Erwin did to their fine mansion -- they would have none of it. And so nightly they perch on the bamboo trellis on this side of the pool and turn their faces westward toward their fine pavilion, 51 feet or so away, and disdain it utterly. Twice I have made it a point to take a gander at them when rain has been coming down in torrents. There they sit on their bamboo perches, their heads tucked under their wings, and the water cascading off their fine feathers as though they were plastic or some such. They remind me so much of turkeys I once saw on a bitter winter's evening along about sundown, the thermometer at 5 below zero and the wind blowing a gale. There were only a few scatter, leafless big trees across the landscape and no protection against the cold. It astonished me that they left the warmth of the sheds where they had supped and flew to the tops of the wind-swept trees to spend the night. I hope they knew what they were doing but I thought them exceedingly silly. And the same goes for the peacocks. ....

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P. S.,

Just as I was finishing this memo, J. H. came over, bringing me a box of crackers he knew I liked which he said he had bought from town but forgot to give me.

He said a night nurse had been secured for Adam Regard who apparently has suffered a slight stroke. I think Celeste may not know about it.

And just after he had departed and I started to insert this post script, the grapevine rattled and I learned of the death of the Dark Duke.

Always fond of children, he had promised a little girl some cloth for a new dress. The children in the family of one of his friends had been at Ashley's store where the little girl had admired the piece of cloth and after the children had gone on toward their home up the road a piece, Log had purchased enough for a dress and was just starting out when Clyde Claude Emmet Davis came along and the two of them sat down on a bench in front of the store to chat a little, both being quite sober. Then Log got up and said he believed he would take the cloth to the little girl's mama so she could make the dress for the little girl and surprise her. And so he went up the road, remained about five minutes and then started back down the Bermuda road on the left hand side when a car came along, swinging from the right side to the left side of the road, striking Log from the back with such force that it must have broken all the bones in his torso and caved in the hood of the car. The force even knocked one of his shoes from his foot and he toppled from the front of the car over into the ditch.

The car striking Wilson Baptist was driven by Wilson Remo, a tenant of Charles Mazurette on Little River, a man who is known as Sweet Milk and notorious for his inability to drive a car properly.

So passes the Dark Duke of Modena, brother of Peter, now at Angela, and kinsman of Puny who died last month.

Heaven is a happier place to contemplate, what with the prospect, if one is lucky enough to get inside the gate, of spending an eon or two, listening to the rippling humor of the Dark Duke and responding to the unending grins constantly breaking over his face as he occasionally turns to pat good old Emma, grazing in greener pastures than she ever knew on earth, good old Emma, the mule, who was, I feel quite sure, one of the first familiar figures the Dark Duke recognized this evening on arriving inside the Pearly Gates.....



10523

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Monday, May 16th, 1960.

On the plantation much of the talk is about the Sunday accident. As the talk continues, the mention of the accident is usually followed by a question about whether the accident was a "bad" one or a "good" one. The question is usually asked in a way that suggests that the accident was a "bad" one. The answer is usually given in a way that suggests that the accident was a "good" one. The answer is usually given in a way that suggests that the accident was a "bad" one.

**Memorandum:** A beautiful summer's day, sort of 60-ish last night, somewhat upper 80 -like today. At coffee, I was mildly surprised but withal delighted to see how gay was mine hostess who said she had slept wonderfully and apparently was wooed down by nothing. I find myself wondering what everyone else knows, that Madam Regard had a stroke.

From town comes the sound of much buzzing as a result of "ultra confidential" news Charles Cunningham conveyed to the editor of his rival newspaper, to Carmen and to whom not. The Baton Rouge widow lady has finally said yes to Charles' proposal. August had been thought of as a possible date but both prospective groom and bride think they cannot wait until August so that the latter part of July may witness the magical moment. On previous occasions, Charles has given the world to understand he would marry one or another lady and it has always come to naught. Now everyone is content to wait and see.

As to the prospective bride, she is reported to have money. She can't believe she will ever be content not to travel about a great deal but she says that perhaps if she is happily married, her inclinations will change. That sounds ominous before things get really into the swing. She hates old houses and heirlooms and so Charles has promised to sell his home and heirlooms and build her a fine modernistic house with all modern furnishings. He doesn't explain whence the money may come for those who are supposed to know about such things declare he hasn't any. Mildred Cunningham's son who married the Breazeale girl a year or so ago is finishing his law studies at L.S.U. this month and plans hanging out a shingle in Natchitoches. Charles says he has promised to sell his home to this nephew of his and the nephew says he and his wife have promised to buy it as the embryo (embryo) lawyer is just starting out, one speculates on how much the sale of his house by Charles will contribute toward the money required to build the new modernistic home his prospective bride has been promised.

In short, the whole business sounds just a little zannie and what, if anything, may come of it is anybody's guess.



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Monday, May 17th, 1960.

On the plantation much of the talk is about the Sunday accident. As the Dark Duke carried no insurance, the means was sought today to gather together funeral expenses. The merchant-planter was consulted and he suggested the Mazurette tenant who was totally responsible for the death should at least scrape up the money for the funeral. Another group thought it but just that the Dark Duke's brother, Peter, should be brought from Angola to attend his brother's funeral. From the casting about by Leg's friends, I learned something I had never thought about before, to wit, how is the expense of such a trip covered, and I learned that it will cost twenty five dollars to have Peter brought here for the funeral and returned. I assume he must travel under guard although he is now eligible for parole from prison anyway if he can show the authorities he has a job waiting for him but I know not how a man in prison can round up such a guarantee. And so it seems the boys are taking up a collection to defray the expense of bringing Peter to Cane River for the funeral to which, naturally, I shall most certainly contribute.

Another funeral is scheduled for this week, -- the grandchild of Nina Brown. The child's papa is in the Army, stationed in North Africa. His family was flown to him last Christmas time. Now one of the children has died and the body is being flown back here for burial. The father of the child arrived here on Friday. The body of the child is expected tomorrow, -- Tuesday. Nina's daughter, however, is remaining with the other children in Africa while the soldier comes to Cane River to bury the child. Somehow it does seem like a heap of doings and once more I question the advisability of the Armed Forces flying families all over the globe so that the individuals in service may enjoy all the delights of domesticity, no matter how remotely the post may be situated. I'm surprised that the Navy doesn't have liners, fitted out with apartments, so that wives and children may accompany the battleships when the sailors who are married put out to sea. I think today's business in Paris seems to have been pretty disgraceful and one cannot but regret the incredible bungling in Washington during the past couple of weeks that got us into such a lamentable position. It will have a profound effect on the Presidential election, I think, but cannot guess which Party will benefit by it...

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Tuesday, May 17th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Partly cloudy and altogether hot and humid. The head of the Parish Library called me this morning to confirm our previously agreed upon date of next Monday for a Melrose tour of Melrose. About fifty librarians from around the State will attend. There will be a luncheon at the Town House before the 2 o'clock tour. I was invited to be one of the three guests invited and I declined with thanks. J. H. and Celeste were the other two receiving invitations and although Celeste declined on behalf of J. H., she accepted for herself. ....

'phone interruption.... As I was saying, the lady will have appointments that will make it better for her to remain in town and so I shall receive the half hundred visitors on my own hook although an additional host or hostess would be helpful.

The 'phone interruption brought up a point about which I had never thought about before. When I answered the buzz, the operator said Long Distance was calling and asked if I would accept a collect charge from Peter Battiste. I replied the affirmative. What I had never thought about was the fact that, no doubt of necessity, it is natural the prison must monitor out-going calls from prisoners. With possibly a receiver or two down on my own party line plus wire tapping at the prison end of the connection it was almost an impossibility for either speaker to understand what the other said. Peter wanted to ask when the Dark Duke was to be buried. I told him it would take place on Thursday. Hence couldn't understand the word Thursday. I didn't try spelling since he can't spell but I repeated the word slowly several times and he couldn't get it. Then I tried another approach and said it would be next Thursday, -- Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. He must have understood in part since he expressed surprise there would be three days of it. I wasn't sure if Thursday was the final date determined upon but told him I believed it was Thursday and that I would contact his sisters and then let him know. I asked him for his 'phone number, forgetting he probably doesn't read numbers. I think he said, after some



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scuffling about that the number is 9631. I asked him what station, what exchange, and he said just 8631, or something sounding faintly like that. We scuffled over the a while and I was never quite sure and he never did understand what I was saying when I asked for the station or exchange. interruption.....

I have just returned from Zelma's house by the Rand camp where the sister of Peter and the Dark Duke, --up from Alexand is staying. We tried phoning the prison but couldn't get anywhere, and so sent a wire. It seems a prisoner may be sent to the funeral of a parent but of no other relative and as Peter's parents have been dead since he was a little boy he can't claim his brother's funeral as an excuse for getting away but it seems, according to his sister, that he is subject to parole on the 18th and perhaps that fact was helpful in getting the 'phone call through but whatever the reason, the connection was so poor, it didn't serve to much end, I fear.

I rejoice to know that James and Kay have been able to get out of doors and venture as far afield as St. Francisville. Such an outing ought to mean so much to both of them.

I did not write Aunt Willie this week, not knowing where to address her. From the Alabama communication, one might assume she is traveling. Perhaps she was only running over to Alabama, perhaps she was heading for Louisiana, en route to California with Irma, -- perhaps almost anything. In view of the tensions existing between Baton Rouge and Charleston, I hesitate to inquire from Baton Rouge in any matter concerning Charleston and so I find myself quite in the dark as to the globe-trotter's whereabouts.

Juanita B. called me yesterday, asking me to lend her a hand in getting the artist to do some pictures she wants to take with her when, on next Wednesday, the 25th, she and Pat go on their vacation that will carry them to lower Florida, Nassau and so on.

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Wednesday, May 18th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Weatherwise, today is a carbon copy of yesterday, -- hot, humid and cloudy.

Last night, before folding up my beard about 1 a.m., I knocked off a Cane River Memo for next week Thursday's issue. I called it, for lack of anything better: Weekend of Friday, the 13th.

As I failed to name Miss Sally directly, I assume Mat will denounce me on some unrelated fact, as in the Children of Strangers thing, such as using the real name, Wilson Battiste, instead of Leg, the Dark Duke or whatever.

And tonight a few people from here will probably be going to the funeral home in Natchitoches where Leg's body will be held until the funeral tomorrow. What local people like is a wake at somebody's house in the country where everyone can go, get wedged into chairs that are so jammed into rooms of inadequate size that one can fall over everybody, if one prefers being inside, or if one prefers God's great out-of-doors, ample space to stand around and talk endlessly, seeing new arrivals coming on foot or horseless carriages and, occasionally, taking time out to fly up or down the road to pick up some new-comers and so while away the night in chit-chat and reunion. In view of these facts and factors, one can readily understand how a few people trickling into a funeral home, recognizing only a few of the people present and then emerging into the street, can strike one as too dull for words.

I pen these lines at 11:30. A couple of hours ago the artist phoned to say she had just returned from the funeral home and that Leg "looked plum natural jus' like he was in the big read" .... "and sleepin'" and that "he sure looks like he is well set up for his goin' away, --jus' a good as anybody with a lot more money for a real good funeral".

The artist knew what she was talking about but from the tone of her voice, it was obvious she had had a nip or two and when she told me she had gone with Marie and Pete Morin, I realized the whiskey tender was inevitable since Marie and Pete are well known for always extracting drinks out of people if anyone is so light hearted and carefree as to employ them to do any chauffeuring.



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I am late in doing my work at this desk tonight because I wanted to hear the three hour broadcast that CBS put on, reproducing the news of the world's reporters interview in the famous Mr. K. at Palais de Chaillot today. I think radio sometimes forgets it is reporting news and flops over into research which, of course, is another medium for a different audience. I don't mind the program giving the listeners a sample of Mr. K.'s voice but from then on, I think the programs would be vastly improved if the listeners weren't forced to sit through endless tirades in the original Russian, followed by a translation in French, followed by a translation into English. It strikes me that at least two thirds of one's time might be saved and interest in the programs were restricted to a single language. At least for myself, understanding not a word of Russian, it seemed to me there was no point in listening to it endlessly and I must say that after having heard the thing translated into one language I did understand, it seemed pointless to listen to the same thing dished out all over again into another language.

There was something about Mr. K.'s twistings of the truth that frightened me a little because they reminded me so much of der Schoen in that, after having made up a falsehood, mentally, he expressed it so vehemently that he sounded as though he really believed what he had just fabricated and such doings can be disastrous on any level but the more devastating when employed by people who have the responsibility of the safety of millions in their hands. One such instance was Mr. K.'s reference to his Minister of War whom he praised as a veteran of World War 1, and as having fought valiantly against the Japanese in World War 2. I knew nothing about this gent's record but everybody must know, and most certainly Mr. K. must know that Russia didn't get into the war with the Japanese until the other allies had already finished that scuffle so that it was only a matter of hours, -- a few days at most, between the date of Russian entry and the capitulation of the Japs. If one weren't kidding himself, every Russian would know better than ever to mention the "heroic" record of the Soviet participation or failure to participate effectively in that theatre of World War 2.

My hostess at coffee this morning was in such gay spirits. There was a noon luncheon and an afternoon at cards.

My day was prosaic enough but mostly spent in gardening and today fresh mustard greens from the Ghana garden went across the fence and the big house, too. J. H. enjoys the early greens and he got some for, of course, he dined with us at the big house, a frequent and very pleasant interlude.

Thursday, May 19th, 1960.

Memorandum: no circumstances were known to me, still at the time of the broadcast of the news of the world's reporters interview in the famous Mr. K. at Palais de Chaillot today.

Pure summer. I had a message for Carmen this afternoon and tried several times unsuccessfully to get a wire before the Red Cross office closed at 4. I recognized the voice of one of the neighbors on this party line, a sister or daughter, I am not sure which, of Rita Meyer, who, being herself in her 80's might well have either a sister or daughter of maturity. I pricked up my ears on one try when I heard the lady say that last night she had listened to the artist speaking to Leston on the 'phone and that she had told him this, that and the other thing about the war and he had responded in such a such a choice of words. What impressed me about the recital was the fact that, as I recall the conversation being quoted, the words and almost the sentences struck me as being almost verbatim. This proved, among other things, that the speaker really has an excellent memory. While last night's conversation was going on, of course, I realized from the indifferent quality of sound reception, that a receiver was down. Intentionally, as I quite often do, I did my best to make the conversation just as dull as I possibly could and, as you know, I can achieve that without even trying. And then, as often happens, the listener, that is to say, the eaves-dropper, gets bored and hangs up which, of course, automatically registers in sound reception. Then I took the opportunity to say what I really wanted to say which, it suddenly struck me this afternoon, did not jibe at all with what I had heard in my own eaves-dropping although, I had to admit the quotations were correct. The difference as to truth, however, came about because the original eaves dropper hadn't heard what transpired after she had hung up. I never did get Red Cross before closing time but I really did enjoy the effort.

But leaving reports to reports and turning to facts, the day was all blue and gold but much too hot, -- in the 90's, -- for a large gathering in a church with a blistering tin roof for any sort of an occasion, and the hour for the service was about the hottest of the day, around 3 o'clock. Peter reached Melrose around 11:15 and as his parole papers have not as yet been executed, he traveled by car with a guard, both prisoner and guard in civilian clothes, of course. He visited his sister, Janie, at her home and then went to see his sister.



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Allie, who had come up from Alexandria and was staying with Zelma. It is said that Allie is arranging to have someone in Alexandria guarantee Peter a job and that means he will probably be living with Allie shortly and working in Alexandria. Under ordinary circumstances, this should make an ideal set-up since Allie's husband died last year and Allie is bringing up three sons of her sister, Neenie, and for uncle and aunt of the boys to provide a stable household the prospect should look quite pleasing. But, except for Allie, none of the Batistes are domestically inclined and generally they seem less sympathetically inclined toward each other than toward people who are in no way related and so it is difficult to imagine how such an arrangement might pan out.

I thought several times today how differently things were handled for two youths with Melrose connection. Peter got a couple of years in prison for having participated in a cattle theft that netted him ten bucks. John Went lifted a thousand dollars worth of merchandise, retains his status in college, and will enjoy the services of a private psychiatrist all summer. It certainly must be admitted that it pays to get one's self born into the night class and the advantageous color.

It was kind of Warren to take time out to pen me a line from Paris. I was sorry to learn of the Cluny misadventure and hope he wasn't vastly inconvenienced by the loss of other items than the money.

The other letters speak for themselves. I am sending the Dorman letter to James and will pass it along to little Miss Lee when it comes back so she may retain it, although it is of no importance as a document but does reveal the strange Dorman flurry that for some reason, never known to me, China had a way of putting Carrie into a tizzy and I assume the editorial from the Journal, a sensational sheet if ever there was one, must have had to do about current American relations with that country.

On the home front, radishes began moving from the garden along with more mustard greens. I staked tomatoes at dawn and tonight at dusk, the rows of sentinels in bamboo looked trim and pretty.....

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Friday, May 20th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot this morning until noon when an inch of rain descended, lapped up by the dry soil so that none ran away, and tonight is cloudy and pleasantly cooler.

Coffee went off pleasantly enough this morning. My hostess observed, however, that Sunday dinner might be a little off schedule, however, as Sunday is Dee Hertzog's birthday and, following Mass, the aforesaid hostess had in mind to journey down to Magnolia bearing gifts and there participating in natal day festivities. I observed I wasn't expecting to catch any train and any old hour suited me and that I adored bread and milk and could readily skip the rigors of a noon day meal if my absence would assist in making the wheels of domesticity turn more smoothly but I was assured that we would dine, although it might be later than the usual 11:30.

An hour and a half later when I was returning from the post office, I listened to quite a different tune by the same lady. Sister had phoned from Montrose, saying she and her daughter were on their way to spend the day and night with Blythe in Alexandria and would be back this way Saturday afternoon. Hard on the heels of that call came one from Juanita B., advising the lady that Juanita A. had just phoned from Conroe, Texas, to advise she and Joe would be here for the week end. And prior to these two calls had come one from New Iberia, stating that Joe Regard, nephew, was just back from some Pacific isle, and that he, the girl, will marry on June 14th, his sister, his mother and his step-father had in mind driving to Natchitoches sometime this week end to visit Madam Regard and to stop off here to say Howdy all around. The hostess was asked to name the day and hour that would be most convenient. She suggested Sunday morning with a view to entertaining at dinner. The two subsequent calls seemed to throw things out of joint and somehow Dee's birthday seemed to get lost in the shuffle.

Aside from that flurry, the balance of the day seemed so prosaic. I vastly enjoyed weeding the chana garden, following the rain and listening to Dot and the girls screaming at each other from after beyond the Yucca hedges.



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Friday, May 20th, 1960.

The morning post was notable primarily because of the unusual tenor in the note, herewith attached, which struck me as so different when one person is asking another to do a favor. From the cancellation date on the envelope, I notice the letter was mailed yesterday, the 18th. I have a feeling, therefore, that Ola Mae didn't make it to New York with Carolyn and that Carolyn has jettisoned back as yet since Ola Mae would probably have asked her to stir up the proposed advertisement. It is accordingly to me that the appeal is made for assistance and I must say it strikes me more as an executive memo than the request of a friend for help. Long ago we both found out that not all minds operate along the same sort of lines and I take the present bit of evidence to be an adequate example of our point.

A letter will go forward in the next post and it will be addressed to Ola Mae and it will contain not one page of copy but at least a half dozen from which she may select the one she thinks best suits her purpose. A covering note will be attached to the copies of the advertisement, and it will be short and probably read something like:

"Ola Mae, thanks for your laconic note. Here's the stuff."

Tonight the phone is out of order. A short time before it died, a call came through from the Enterprise, relating the fact that some gentleman named Elmo Morgan, said to be adequately heeled, had inquired about contacting me with a view to starting a project to stave off the destruction of little old ante bellum plantation outbuildings. If that isn't carrying coals to New Castle, then I never heard of such a thing. The Enterprise called me to say that a copy of a recent Cane River Memo about vegetable gardening plus an article by Ursula Walker in the October 22nd, 1959 issue of The Enterprise about Ghana, were going forward. -- I know not where, -- to the aforesaid Elmo Morgan. I trust Mr. Morgan will have as much success with other prospective contacts as he has with me in trying to engineer his interest in old plantation buildings.

And so, in the quiet of Friday night, begins a week end that I hope may not be too hurly-burly. Perhaps tiresome people and tame enough events will tend to cancel out each other and that will be much to be thankful about.....

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Sunday, May 22nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Sunny to partly cloudy, humid and hot all week end.

And the week end was hurly-burly.

Joe Henrys came Friday night. When taking the mail to the post office on Saturday morning, I met J. H. at the cattle gap, heading toward his house. He said he wanted to ask me for advice. He said the lady doctor had just called him and said Madam Regard might die any time and might live a few days. He asked me if I thought he ought to tell Celeste right then. I suggested he put it off until noon at least as she was making somewhat elaborate plans for entertaining and being entertained during the next 24 hours and the knowledge he had to impart might contribute nothing to her stability. He agreed and returned to the store but did let her know what she already knew, -- the end might be expected within the ensuing week.

She and Juanita A. tried to get me to go look at the old obiaur house and thence to Maganolia but I declined, having too many things needing my attention. After dinner, both ladies ran in to town, stopping at the hospital at 1 to see Madam Regard and thence to an afternoon of cards in town. At 6:30, Celeste rounded up a priest to give Madam Regard extreme unction.

In the mean time, along about 2, Blythe Rand appeared, bearing Sister and daughter. The daughter was going home to Shreveport and Sister was returning to Alexandria with Madam Rand to spend Saturday night and thence to Shreveport by train.

The daughter said goodbye four times and finally, after Blythe and Sister's departure, went to town with Pat to catch a bus.

J. H. called Shreveport to let the doctor know his daughter was returning. J. H. gathered the doctor was under some artificial stimulant and so phoned Pat in town not to let the girl go but rather to send her back here to spend the night. The General was contacted in Baton Rouge and it was decided that he and wife would drive to Alexandria on Sunday, pick up Sister and then take her to Shreveport for J. H. thought Sister on Saturday afternoon seemed on the verge of a nervous breakdown. She has seemed that way to me for 20 years.



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And so this morning, after breakfast, the daughter was taken to town where she caught the bus for Shreveport and why she didn't wait and go with her mama and the General at 2 o'clock, I know not. While in town, Joe tells me, J. H. and Pat drove by Dan's house to pick up a suitcase but J. H. did not go inside as Dan has been on a bat since Thursday. When Pat brought out the suitcase and put it down to open the back of the car to put it in, a dog came along and lifted one hind leg on same. Smile.

oe Regard, back from the Pacific and done with his military service, arrived at noon today, in company with his girl friend to whom he will be married on June 15th, his half sister, and his mother, Betty Regard Clou and his stepfather, Keith. We all dined amidst much merriment and after a little tour and picture taking, everybody went to town except me, I remaining to receive some friends of Celeste to whom she had promised a tour. Juanita A. r. turned to Texas and Joe got back here from town about 4 and visited me until 10 tonight while we waited for J. H. and Celeste to sup with them, but the coming not, we sandwiched and went our several ways.

I. S. Willard phoned on Saturday afternoon. She reported seeing Kay and James a day or two ago and said that Kay's auntie had paid her a surprise visit recently. This was news and it seems strange James has never mentioned it. Would one assume that Aunt Willie is heading toward California with Irma. I believe I. S. Willard said Irma was with Aunt Willie on the surprise visit to the Register domain.

It goes without saying that I got no news or radio listening today and so know nothing as to what goes on in the world except from word of mouth reports which included an account of a couple of college youths being killed by falling off the bluff at Grand core where they were having a "night picnic", according to my informant, with some young ladies, also from the college.

It is agreed a smash is inevitable at the Shreveport menage but which pieces will fly, nobody seems to know. One night J. H., who is supposed to be getting rest from his own physical difficulties, as called at midnight by Sister, asking him to take John Wenk to Philadelphia for a month so John might have the benefit, if any, of a psychiatrist the Wenks had heard about there. Imagine. For herself, Sister said she was contemplating suicide. Blythe was noble in inviting Sister for the week end but I think she contributed nothing thereby.

As for myself, I'm feeling pretty good and must now get to work so I may be up early and dust off the magnolias in preparation for tomorrow's 50 visiting librarians.

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Monday, May 23rd, 1960.

Memorandum:

A lovely summer's day.

Joe left at 4:30 this morning, wanting to be in Arcadelphia or some place in Arkansas by 8 where he proposed getting himself a Volkswagon, Juanita A. having already praised hers with the same enthusiasm as her husband, who, having long since become delighted with his wife's, decided he simply had to have one, too.

I did not see Celeste at coffee, as she did not come down from town until 11 when after noon dinner, she entertained a bit and then returned to town, I am told, for I did not see her.

At 8:30, the chairman of the library festival phoned to say she had just heard of Mrs. Regard's condition and said she preferred to let the Melrose tour go by the boards on this go-round and asked if I cared to suggest any other entertainment, in the line of a tour, for the 50 odd people. I suggested visiting the old Lemee House after luncheon and then doing a Cane River tour and outlined the historical points along the way that could be pointed out to the touring librarians. She asked about the Church of the Children of Strangers and I told her I would arrange that and call her back. Father Calahan was very cooperative and said he would be delighted to do the honors between 3 and 4, and since he is an author of a book on the subject, I feel he gave them all the wanted. The chairman was delighted on learning this news and that was that.

Just as I hung up the phone, a call came through from town, asking if some camera people could come down to make pictures of Melrose for Esso, currently making a Louisiana film. I responded negatively, explaining why. I was told the camera men would be able to "slip in" so that even though there were other matters of death to hand, nobody would be inconvenienced. I responded that from my own observations, no camera men could ever "slip in" and that I didn't propose experimenting with the Esso contingent. The voice at the other end of the wire didn't seem pleased and somehow tried to convey the notion that Esso was doing me a favor by asking for film footage and I corrected any notion in the speaker's mind that I agreed, and that was that.



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The clerk and I were just finishing dinner when the General and wife appeared unannounced and broke bread. J. H. came over and there was much merriment. The General said his sister wouldn't speak to him during the trip yesterday to Shreveport from Alexandria. She did complain to the world, however, he had whisked her away from Mrs. Rands at 1 in the afternoon and that, as Mrs. Rand had given her no food, she had nearly starved by the time she finally got food at 6 last night. Knowing the Rand set up, that was probably the bigger lie of the day.

In the afternoon, both Dr. Wenk and John Wenk headed out to visit a psychiatrist in Philadelphia. Somebody insisted, I suppose Sister, that the seeing-eye-dog accompany them which strikes everyone as the height of folly since ohn will be all the time with his father and has quite bright eyes.

The General and J. H. had made arrangements for John to consult eminent psychiatrists in aton Rouge and New Orleans but, --and this confused them all, Sister maintained that they both had insisted on the Philadelphia trip, whereas neither of them had every heard of the Philadelphia psychiatrist.

The General and spouse, on their way down here this noon, stopped off at the Hatchitoches hospital and chatted with Madam Regard who recognized them and appeared keen of mind. Last night it was thought at one time she had already expired.

In the aviary section, the peacocks are getting so tame I almost have to push them out of my way to avoid stepping on them. One of the girls who had been appearing but infrequently of late, remained around all day, leading me to surmise that she had been setting but that probably some old armadillo or some such had broken up her nest.

All the secretaries failed to show up this evening. I assume the week end, followed by a hot day at the end of the hoe, must have knocked them out. It didn't matter for the mail didn't appear interesting. One letter made me laugh by merely feeling of it since it obviously is a wedding invitation. I can't think of anyone I know who is contemplating a trip to the altar, suggesting that, indeed, I probably don't even know the person who may have sent it and frankly, I care less.

We had more stuff out of the garden today and the place is beginning to look pretty. And thus the week gets under way and so far, it is so good.....

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Tuesday, May 24th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A lovely summer's day, 90-ish but with a pleasant breeze from the Gulf to handle some perspiration problems.

I coffee-ed across the fence and found the lady inordinately nervous, not on account of Madam Regard but rather because of her inability to make social engagements with any assurance of being able to keep them. It is all very distressing. As for Madam Regard, she appears unexpectedly alert mentally. Gathering what I can from second hand sources, I interpret the present condition parallel or identical with those so often obtaining in the wake of the moment when the candle is thought to have gone out and then, by some miracle, not understood by the medical world, suddenly bursts into a brighter glow than before from which it never again tapers off but suddenly and without warning is suddenly extinguished.

One of Madam Regard's other daughters, Edna, came up from Mansura on Sunday to be with her mother but is so high-strung that J. H. had to get her a room at the hospital where she spent the night. The next morning she had to write letters to friends about her Thursday bridge game and so departed for home on Tuesday, what with her mama seeming so much brighter.

It is true that Madam Regard's heart did appear to stop beating on Saturday night, just as the lady doctor had predicted it would. The lady doctor remarked yesterday that never had she been so happy as when her beloved patient had so convincingly made a liar out of her.

Early this morning, having tired of pushing peacocks out from under foot on the front gallery, I issued invitations to them to breakfast on the other side of the house where they appeared as though having spent all their days there and in perfect contentment. As they easily dominate the aviary when all members are present at feeding time, I shall continue from now on, giving them their rations in the white garden while Emmet and Erwin shall dine on the other side, as had been their custom and the guineas will break bread by the side gate to the white garden while the cats will do the same at the front side gate to Yucca. By thus preparing repasts in separate places, everybody gets a share and peace reigns all around. The ducks will come and



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gobble up the cats food without any feline protests, only looks of regret and sometimes the ducks and the peacocks will take a peck at the cats which invariably send the old gray Grandpa flying but they simply can't budge the little old black grandpa who never takes a pass at them but simply stays put and, when the marauders see they can't worry him, they simply pass him by as though he were a permanent fixture which I trust he is.

The wedding invitation I received a day or so back indicated that Mr. and Mrs. Mathew Hertzog Chopin requested the honor of my presence at the marriage of their daughter, -- a young lady I never laid eyes on. I saw Mat perhaps 15 years ago one afternoon when he and his wife called on Miss Cammie. Madame Chopin has been the Enterprise secretary for a long time, during both the Beckerman and Walker tenures and I have been told she generally reads my column before it goes to press. If she read the one of a week or so back, having to do with helter-skelter wedding invitations, it does seem odd that my name should have appeared on the Chopin list.

An air mail from The Bluff, I guess from Irma O'Brien, indicates she and Aunt Willie were in Baton Rouge where they were visited at their hotel by James and Kay once and that Irma and Aunt Willie were twice at the Register apartment and found the couple looking fine. My secretary was no good and there was an interruption so that I never did finish the piece. I must say it's odd that Baton Rouge never let me know, haven't breathed a word about it yet, that The Bluff had been there.

In view of all that has gone before, it seems to me it would have been so natural either for James or Kay to have made some reference to it, especially as they mentioned it last week to Irma Sompayrac Willard.

The radio says we put a new Midas "spy in the skies" in orbit today. I heard nothing about the Rocket, however.....

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Wednesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1960.

Memorandum:

A full summer's day.

It is pleasant to report that Madam Regard is said to be a little better today. It is accepted as a matter of course that this can but reflect a momentary tendency but it is pleasant none the less.

Her other daughter, Celine, a facsimile of her mother, was here today. She, Celeste and I had coffee together. Celeste had difficulty walking as she has a boil or some such on one of her toes. But when I suggested to Celine that we might take a little walk to see the peacocks and make a round to see how the vegetables, if any were flourishing, Celeste forgot her affliction and marched off bravely with us. She had never seen the peacocks before and found them quite pretty. She had seen the garden before but suddenly fell in love with it and gathered many vegetables to take home with her. There must have been talk about the garden at dinner for at supper tonight, J. H. glancing about the table, said he sure wished there were more radishes. I told him I reckoned he would be tired of them but he allowed as how he never did and so he may have them at dinner and supper for many days ahead.

At 7 this morning, the Rocket called from Washington. See attached memo.

At 10 this morning, the artist came to see me and continued to baffle me by her mathematics. She brought me an excellent picture and said that if I liked it, she would like to sell it to me for half the price she charged me for the last picture I purchased from her because she had just brought two little pigs and wanted to buy some food for them. I told her I would buy the picture at the price she named and added that if I could round up some other boards, I should like some more like the one she had brought. She said each of those would cost me twice the sum I was paying for the present one. I allowed as how I would have to think about that which was another way of saying I wasn't dreaming of indulging in such foolishness. She has already over-spent her June Old Age check on advances from the store and so I reckon



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she will begin worrying me about doing the pictures

in a day or two if, indeed, she doesn't start in on the  
phone tonight. I never try driving down her  
quotations but since she knows perfectly well she  
can't push a balky mule like me, she will have quite  
a lot of fun trying until "Pa" really does need  
a short, when she will return to price sanity and we  
shall be able to do some business. Fortunately, I  
have nobody pressing me for masterpieces, that is, fortunately  
for me, but unfortunately for her, "Pa" will be  
grumbling anon and she will buckle.

Tilloah again tormented my dreams last night. I find it  
interesting that although nightmares seldom come my way,  
it is always the same figure that appears. I suppose  
the explanation is simple enough but the persistency surprises me  
I heard the President's speech tonight on the failure  
of the summit meeting and I thought it excellent  
as to tone but a little over-weighted politically.  
I suppose one of the many sets of differences  
between a statesman and a politician is that a statesman  
can admit error and go ahead while a politician never can  
admit an error and therefore can seldom get much of a  
start to go in any direction except backward.

Carmen called today with her usual gossip, including the fact  
that Charles Cunningham will announce in  
engagement in both local papers on the morrow Mrs.  
Walker called later to say that she had had coffee with  
Charles the other day and he had spoke of his determination  
to give up all the family antiques and heirlooms  
to please his wife who insists on everything ultra  
modern. Charles explained that antiques were less precious  
than a companion for, as he put it, "When you come home at the end of the day,  
your antiques can't say: 'How a re you  
feeling darling?'"  
He has a point, of course but neither can gas pipe furniture  
say that either and since the prospective bride says she  
never likes to "stay put" but adores traveling about,  
it would seem off hand as though Charles might do well  
to invest in a modernistic parrot, trained to

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#### Memo of Telephone Conversation:

The Rocket 'phoned from Washington, D. C. at 7 this  
morning, 9 o'clock Washington time. She  
was planning for an extended session with Linden Johnson  
at 11, Washington time. The Senator from Texas was  
to be consulted about Pan American Film Foundation or whatever it is  
called.

The purpose of the 15 minute call to me doesn't seem  
clear, although there was an inquiry about  
Helen Bullock's name for apparently the Foundation  
which Helen presides over was to be contacted.

There were letters from Henry Clay Watson, my friend, read,  
and much talk about making a naval pircure  
of river fighting in the Mississippi during the Civil War.

Another film planned was to revolve about the  
artist. Some film agent in New York had manifested vast  
interest in same and urged immediate execution and  
the Rocket threatened to honor me with a visit on Sunday  
or Monday regarding same. Some shots no used  
in either of the Hodges films but nevertheless taken for that purpose  
might be incorporated in the artist film such as a strip of  
color film wherein Emma met, Erwin and I were doing  
handsprings together, the thought being that scene could be followed  
by one of the artist seen painting some ducks and so on and so forth  
on and on.

There was evidence that the same old squeeze was on in that  
it was hoped an air plane would deliver stationary from  
Ola Mae this morning bearing the Ramsey imprint so  
that at least the first page of the prospectus that  
would be discussed with Linden Johnson might be somehow  
jammed through on this new letter head before the scheduled  
11 o'clock conference. Some people must thrive on such  
split-second doings but it tires me just to think of it.

I was asked if I had read her letter on one point or other.  
I said I never read letters I do not receive. She  
said perhaps I would get the letter later in the week as, come to  
think of it, it had not perhaps gone forward before yesterday.  
"Come to think of it", is a phrase people with fertile imaginations  
for stirring up projects but never giving thought to finishing them  
should never use since they invariably think in futures and  
never in past moments, no matter how recent.

And I guess that's about allof the conversation that  
was pleasant but more or less pointless....



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Thursday, May 26thk 1960.

Memorandum;

A perfectly lovely day.

I awoke at a quarter of one to the sound of considerable thunder and closed the doors giving on the front gallery, leaving open those on the back. The wind was high and the rain being blown about briskly but I was so sleepy I couldn't spend too much time watching the elements before bouncing back on my downy pillow.

This morning the skies were clear and the temperature deliciously cool and everything new washed in appearance although the rain had not, it turned out, been excessive, perhaps not more than a quarter of an inch, enabling the hoe-hands to resume their labors at dawning as usual.

Celeste and her sister were at Church this morning at 9 and so I didn't see them today. The servant, however, had prepared a brew for me and reported that the nurse at the hospital had called about 8:45 to say Madam Regard was much brighter this morning..

I went to supper about 5:30 tonight and as I found nobody in the dining room, I explored the kitchen where I found the food on trays ready to be served but no cook. Five minutes later the cook appeared coming from the front gate. She had left everything in the kitchen a few minutes before to skip down to the overseer's house, just below the gardens, when she had learned through the grapevine, I suppose, that Sam's Peace had just expired on the river bank.

Sam's health hadn't been very promising during a number of recent years when he had suffered from dropsy but of late he seemed much more active and in quite a happy frame of mind. I went to the store about 2 this afternoon and chatted with him for a moment where he was sitting on the gallery. One of the cattle overseers came along and Sam said he thought he would saddle up a horse and ride with him if he was going toward the Red River pastures. The overseer said he thought he wouldn't make a round there



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until the morrow and Sam said he believed he would accordingly go fishing instead. He kept his fish pole concealed in some bushes near the front gate where he could easily pick it up and put it back again and so he headed down the road toward Mr. Earnest's house. He caught a fine string of fish and apparently was about to return up the bank to the public road when he fell dead. Fortunately, he fell up the embankment and so did not fall into the river.

And so vanishes from the local scene another personality mentioned by Lyle, Sam appearing in the Friends of Joe Gilmore, as I recall.

Sam has an older brother, said to be at Deht's door at the Charity in Alexandria at the moment. He store immediately notified Sam's only son, --only child,-- Joe Peace, of Shreveport, and there being few relatives, I suppose the funeral will be held within a day or so. Sam never had but one child, -- Joe, --it was said, with the birth having taken place while Sam was living with Mattie, but everyone except Sam declared Joe to be the smitten image of one Nathaniel Wade of Little River who was courting Mattie at the time. So runeth the saga of Sam and Puny and Log and Sam must be having a heap of things to talk and laugh about in He ven tonight.

Although Yucca and the house across the fence are on the same party line, fortunately all around, the bells of the one and the other never sound jointly on in-coming calls. Just now, however, there was a faint buzz from my instrument, perhaps the receiver wasn't on secure or some such, although it really couldn't have been that, I guess, but anyhow, when I picked up the receiver, I heard the familiar voice of a blind Shreveport going a mile a minute, talking about his hilarious adventures in Philadelphia with the voice of his wife chiming in and the merchant-planter sounding bored. I conclude the family is back together again. I can only marvel that J. H. can put up with such an incredible merry-go-round.

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Friday, May 27th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Another lovely summer's day. What with Monday being a holiday, I reckon this will be the final out-going memo before the prolonged weekend, including Monday, with no postal service, until Tuesday starts the wheels turning once more. J. H., in spite of the multiple demands on his energies these days, seemed as bright as a button at supper tonight. The reason for his effervescence was revealed by what he said:

"You know....., Madam Regard is really remarkable. I just stopped at the hospital on my way down from town. She was eating her supper and it was a good one and she acted as though she was liking it and her conversation was as bright as ever....."

I can think of no one in this world of whom he was ever so fond and it was really heartening to see the joy her condition, at the moment so improved, that cooed about him like a halo. He will, as always, be in firm control when she does depart but his sorrow will unquestionably be greater than he has ever experienced for any other person in his life. What a commentary of a mother-in-law--son-in-law connection.

Charles is still telling everyone who will listen about his prospective bride and the plans he is making to dispose of his old home and antiques and secure a modernistic dwelling and slap-dab new furnishings.

Celeste told me at the coffee hour today that Toosie Millsbaugh had confided in her yesterday, saying Charles was acting like a pre-teen-ager. He had come into the store to show her an advertisement he was going to insert in the Shreveport Times, reading:

"Wifey: No Likey my old home and antiques which are for sale. Do not 'phone. Do not write. Come see me about it in Natchitoches. Charles Cunningham."



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Toosie said she tried to persuade him to leave out at least the first line but did not know if she had convinced him or not.

He states with some pride that he hasn't had to pay any income tax in several years which is certainly a poor sign for one about to take a flight into matrimony, a new house and new furnishings. One reason why he hasn't had to pay an income tax, or at least so I am informed by reliable newspaper people, is the somewhat quaint way he operates his business. One way he is able to secure customers from a competitor's paper is because he offers advertisers rates that are really below the level at which he can make a profit. So it is that he just squeaks through, owing everybody in town but still operating his paper. It is not only mighty poor business for his paper itself but it is almost devastating for the other paper in town. Perhaps the marriage will alter things a bit. If his wife has lots of money, perhaps the Times will be able to print advertisements gratis or, on the other hand, perhaps the wife will expect her husband to contribute something to the cost of building and furnishing and operating the new home, in which the old, un-economic practices will have to give way to honest business methods. No wonder his friends and relatives are holding their respective breaths.

Ora called this morning. She has been having a busy turn during the past couple of weeks. --much house guests from California, Arkansas and God knows where all, not to mention some luncheons at home, graduation doings, both as speaker and hostess, and concern over her daughter who has been in the hospital quite ill. Ora says. Of course Ann is into everything, works, has three small children, takes a course at college and is forever going places with Jack on political missions and whatnot. Spinning at breakneck speed seems to suggest a top should be the symbol of the age but I leave it to junior matrons to personify the spirit of the times.

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Sunday, May 28th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Another lovely summer's day.

At the store on Saturday, when picking up the mail, Joe asked me if I had an extra copy of Forestry magazine. I said he had read my article and liked it. I told him I didn't know the magazine was out as yet but when I picked up the mail, there was an envelope containing the current issue. Later in the day, I got an opportunity to examine it and was mildly surprised to discover that the article was not about food, although I had written about food, but rather was about the African House, embellished with illustrations which had already been printed, as I recall, in an earlier issue. I am sending the thing along and don't want it back. Now, naturally, I am curious as to how this happened.

On page 38 of this issue of Forestry is the announcement of a new magazine, --Louisiana Today. I have heard nothing about this before. I had the whole announcement read to me and was impressed by the fact that would-be subscribers are advised to send their communications to Box 1703, Shreveport, which you and I know is Ola Mae's Box number. Are we to conclude from this that La Word is issuing a new magazine. As I have not received an acknowledgement of the copy I sent for advertising last week, --in response to the communication you already have, I shall not write inquiring about Louisiana Today. I shall be interested, however, in learning something about this publication and, in due time, I suppose, I shall be called upon for copy.

As J. H. was leaving the supper table Saturday night, he turned back and said:

"Oh, by the way, that man Cooper called me and I told him it would be alright for him to come tomorrow morning between 9 and 10."

I had to confess I couldn't recall any particular person by that name who might be heading this way although J. H. and I



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I know several people by that name. He jogged his memory a little and said he thought it must be the Hatcher photographer who got out the book on Hatcher and is now doing one on Louisiana.

After supper on Saturday night, Mrs. Walker and her mother, Clara Gennun, and I know not how that name is spelled, came to see me about twilight. The mother had made me a fine afgan, starting it last March when the black birds were in their ascendancy. This shawl is about 72 inches in length and so ample to wrap about my shoulders on cold winter nights. It is fire red with a white border and has four or five black birds sailing across the piece. It is the result of much use of the crochet or knitting needles, --crochet, I believe, and the whole business in a celophane wrapped with zipper so the months will not invade it.

About 9 this morning, Joe arrived with friends from Trinity Texas, --half a dozen or so, asking me to give them a tour. When we reached the African House, J. H. put in an appearance and said Mr. Cooper was here and he had told him to go ahead and shoot the front of the big house and I would see him later. He must have shot the house and folded up his traps slap, for, half an hour later, when I got that far, there was no Cooper and I was glad.

Doreatha tells me that Nina Brown and the artist had a fight over which should get Sam Peace's pig and while they were squabbling, Sam's nephew came along, and whisked off the aforesaid pig in his car so that neither of them got it. They buried Sam at S. t Mathews at 11 this morning and J. H. attended the funeral. Fortunately for my convenience today, the phone has been out of order. The repair man came after dark tonight and reported he had found a pecan limb fallen on the wire in the front garden. It was the quietest day I can remember in ever so long and I loved it and hoped the while there was a measure of relaxation in Lyme.....

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Monday, May 30th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Our lovely summer weather continues.

It is said that Madam Regard continues doing nicely, too, but how long this status will be maintained, is anybody's guess. Her other daughter, Edna, continues here but to what point, I know not. She spends the night here and she and Celeste devote their mornings to riding up and down the big road, calling on Magnolia friends and such like. In the afternoon, there is the usual merry-go-round in town and, I haven't the slightest doubt, the usual call at the hospital, but the hospital visits by each of the daughters seems to be so small a segment from the daily calendar, it appears almost not worth mentioning. I must say it all seems so odd to me that I have given up attempting to understand it.

As for other news as to local patients, I have none although I understand the overseer, Jimmy Sers, who had a stroke in town on Saturday, is still alive but isn't expected to survive.

Joe came to see me this morning. He was furious at all his kin folk and said he wouldn't be coming back here in a long time but when he did, it would be to see me only. I have heard this tale so many times. He was especially vehement in his denunciation of the General and of J. H. neither of whose wives does he like. He said he and I were the only ones who cared anything about Melrose. Foolishly, I observed I thought him mighty lacking in cooperation if that statement were true and, knowing it, he simply walked out and left me holding the bag. Somebody summoned him at that point and a few minutes later, I learned he had gone to town with J. H. Back at dinner time, he was as gay as a cricket. He left for Conroe between 2 and 3 this afternoon. Of the three bags in the family collection, the craziest one always seems to me to be the one with whom I have last had contact, that particularly one being replaced the next time I encounter another, and so on and ad nauseum.

According to the calendar, today was a national holiday and there was no mail delivery and the banks in town were closed, I am told. But it seems that that was the



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only way one might have suspected today was any different from the usual run of the mill week days, all stores being open, everybody in town and country working and nobody being able to imagine it was a holiday except for the unusual number of road runners from other States who passed this way and pretty well gummed up my morning.

Blythe came this afternoon, bringing some Mrs. Hemingway with her. Blythe had mentioned her before as being an artist and that naturally she would be fascinated by local manifestations of Art. The lady turned out to be quite pleasant and about as much interested in Art as the rest of Blythe's friends. I was delighted at the excuse to sit down for an hour with them but I ended up the sitting in full realization that Mrs. Hemingway little noted and cared less about the things she had to see at this bend of the river. I am forever being impressed by the countless strata of human beings, each group somehow cut with the same biscuit iron and everybody in the group perfectly delighted with what means something or nothing, as the case may be, to all the other individuals in the group. For the most part, Blythe's group or rather the individuals making it up, have ample funds, polite manners, can give satisfying bridge parties and luncheons and never read a book or had an original idea and, unlike Blythe, not even interested in anything except themselves.

Celeste's particular group is much lighter and more addicted to cards, --almost exclusively, I should guess. While I think of it, I must report that a day or two after a recent Cane River memo appeared, the one entitled Reform Plantation which, among other things, as I recall, speculated therein about the name, Reform, and how the plantation acquired it. Celeste told me she had enjoyed the article, which I really thing she had read. The same day she journeyed up to Reform to see what progress was being made in the restoration, and the following day, I asked her how things were going at Reform Plantation. She said she didn't know what I was talking about. I mentioned the old obituary place and she reported thereon but ended up by saying she couldn't imagine what I was talking about when I mentioned Reform plantation since she had never known it had any name at all.

And so the Parish got through May 30th without knowing it

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Tuesday, May 31st, 1960.

Memorandum:

Full summer with the thermometer in the 90's.

Naturally, today's post was a little heavier today because of yesterday's holiday for the postal section.

A copy of DownSouth magazine came to hand and I shall send it along under separate cover. It's the one about which Ray Thompson and I had some correspondence and you may or may not find some familiar phraseology in the piece which I shall not have an opportunity to read before sending and I don't want it back, --the article about Lyle. In passing, I might observe that, as near as I can make out, the picture of Lyle looks as much like him as it does of me. The likenesses of the big house and Yucca, however, will be familiar to you as you supplied them through me.

It was nice hearing from Robina. I snipped off the final paragraph containing a number I had asked her for and which I shall not use until later. Until I read her letter, I didn't know she lived on the upper floor and her sister, Ella, on the lower. I always thought it was the other way around. I think the girls are smart in maintaining separate menages. Some Mrs. Baldrige of Baton Rouge wrote me, saying General Henry had referred her to me when she contacted him about his great uncle, Tom Erwin, --a brother of Miss Lieudivine's. It always seems so odd the Henrys never seem to know anything about their kin folks. I responded forthwith, telling her a little about the parents and grandparents of Tom Erwin, since there wasn't much to tell about the family of Tom who never married. I mentioned in my letter to the lady that I was making a carbon copy that I would send to a Baton Rouge friend who, I believe, had been doing some work on the Erwins and that contact would no doubt



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be established with her, if there were other points not covered by my letter. I sent this to James, together with the original Baldrige letter and James may use it or not as he pleases.

I was quite delighted today when I learned that the Catholic Daughters have undertaken a project to restore the old Seminary building in town that is part of the Bishops' menage in the heart of town. It is a charming old building and perhaps may have been the Bishop's carriage house in early times but got its name of Seminary when, in 1854, Bishop Martin, returning from Rome, brought three young priests and 8 seminarians with him and here they were lodged and their education completed. The Catholic Daughters are giving a fund-raising dinner at the Country Club on June 23rd and thought it quite nice of them to invite me to be guest speaker. I declined, in spite of much persistency on their part. I shall do something else for their cause, in fact, I already have done a couple of things since they phoned but with things so unsettled here at the moment and my own inclination to attend to my own knitting and not go tramping around the country, it seems to me my choice was a good one, especially for my own convenience.

The first zinnia blossom of the season, a yellow one, has unfolded in the circle of the Ghana garden and I found along gourd, hidden among the sunflowers, that is as big as a fat grapefruit which seems to be rushing the season a little. The place continues supplying both the big house and the place across the fence with vegetables daily, -- much to everyone's satisfaction, for a wonder.

I kept awake long enough last night to do a little reading, and, having finished Samuel Pepys, went back to the biography of John Paul Jones by Morrison. The biography is perhaps more of a thesis than a popular presentation but, in spite of occasional data that seems a little dull, is informative and to my liking.

And so May gives way to June and may it be just right in Lyme.....

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Wednesday, June 1st, 1960.

Memorandum:

A lovely summer's day. This general area is over six inches below its normal rainfall and while surface soil is dry and dusty, there is an adequate amount of moisture just below the dusty top layer so that things are looking promising enough in gardens and cotton fields beyond.

The James Livingstons of Hatchitoches were present for coffee across the fence this morning. Celeste had to put a bandage on James' elbow where the dog had gouged out a dab of flesh. She explained she had to take up the matter with the animal later in the day about playing with such gusto.

Her sister, Edna, was not present, having returned to her home in Mansura, a sign that Madam Regard is so much better, it is said. Yesterday morning something was said about the possibility that Edna might enjoy strolling through the local gardens to observe the flowers, peacocks and some of the buildings, including Yucca, the African and Ghana houses which she has never seen, I believe. She said the morning was so pretty she thought she would enjoy the delights of front porch rocking but on some later visit would make it a point to look around a little.

The day's post was the better for a letter from Del, as you will note. And so the Chockleys are heading out for Moscow and St. Petersburg. How they do get around. I don't know how many years Del has to her credit but waiting half a century to have measles does seem novel. It reminds me that another lady, of whom I possibly spoke the other day, was laggardly about waiting for an appendectomy until 100 in her 80's, which beats anything in that line both as to fact and spelling that I can remember. I learned today the lady is doing just fine and was not 83, as originally reported but 85.

The general tenor of the note from Mrs. Knapp suggests that lady is slightly wacky. The fact that one can use the word "slightly" seems to be quite a triumph these days in



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regard to the mental status of so many people.

There was a letter from somebody at the Trade Mart in New Orleans, referring to a visit here five years ago which I shall not enclose with this memo, as I want to read it again before answering. The letter refers to an article in Forestry magazine under my name, mentioning the grant of Melrose to Marie Therese. The writer wants to know more about the earlier history of the plantation. Off hand, I can't think of much earlier history of any plantation, prior to the original grant.

A telephone from The Enterprise asks me for copy for next Thursday's column. I shall do this tonight and so get it into tomorrow's post. I haven't an idea on what to write but perhaps will suggest it would be nice if the Rocket would do a film on cotton. And speaking of the Rocket, I find myself wondering if she established contact with you when she was in Lyme on the 16th of the month last past. I don't recall that you mentioned a meeting and she didn't refer to such a matter when she called from Washington last week. I thought I would ask about it when I saw her but when I shall see her, of course, is known only to God since her threat to honor me with a visit on Sunday or Monday last past meant absolutely nothing.

There's a new note of color in the Ghana garden, quite artificial and withal man-made. It appears along the bamboo fences in front of Ghana where the sunflowers are now taller than the fence and could readily be blown over by a strong gust of wind. Instead of giving them support by attaching a string the same brownish color as the bamboo, I decided a splash of color amidst all the greenery of the sunflower leaves and spreading gourd vines, splashes of red would look even more pretty, and so I accordingly tore up strips of turkey-red cotton cloth to use in the place of string. The cloth has the added advantage of not cutting the stems of the sunflowers and at the same time introducing a gay note amidst the green and the effect, I think, will be heightened as the bright red fades a little and the yellow of the sunflower blossoms above and the yellow of the gourds along the fence begin manifesting further color notes. At least one gourd vine is already presenting gourds bigger than grapefruit and the whole business, when come into blossom, will be quite nice, I believe.....

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Thursday, June 2nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Pure summer.

The most surprising news of the day has to do with the surprising recuperation of Madam Regard. Outside the circle of her immediate relatives, it is assumed she is manifesting one of those remarkable spurts of energy and interest that probably will be followed by a sudden relapse at some unexpected moment. But what is astonishing is the fact that she is enough better to be sitting up and the lady doctor has promised to take her for a little ride, perhaps as far as Melrose, if her current gains continue into next week. So far, so good and one must let it rest right there.

In the feathered friend section, the little male guinea appeared disconsolate all day, and his consort never did put in an appearance. I fear she has been swept out of existence and I shall miss her and feel sorry for her companion, too. In the duck section, Emmett has taken to spending her days on her nest again. Instead of a dozen eggs on this go-round, she seems to have produced but five but seems to be completely satisfied with that number, none of which, if I know her, will she ever produce.

In the peacock section, one of the girls continues showing up only once or twice a day and then for only five or ten minutes. I am persuaded she has a nest somewhere and is just as busy as Emmet but, unlike the latter, is making no fuss about it. Dot continues protesting her absence and following quite a clatter of thunder this morning at a quarter of three, he complained through the balance of the night with his unending,-- "they're gone, they're gone".

I was provoked this afternoon when supposedly two men were working in the Ghana section and three horses walked in the front gate, toured the gardens and ended up by a brisk gallop around the vegetable section which did the aforesaid vegetables no particular good.

In town there was quite a flurry when the Mayor almost implied that The Enterprise lied about census figures. It seems



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according to a dictum from Washington, the cities in the entire country of more than ten thousand inhabitants were to be listed at some date, perhaps June 1st, or perhaps sometime in May. In any event, Hatchitoches apparently didn't qualify and nobody connected with the census could state why and therefore it was naturally concluded that the population must have fallen below ten thousand after appeals to local, regional and national offices had been consulted and no figures at all could be produced. The Mayor wrote a hot letter, be-moaning a newspaper that would suggest his city numbered less than ten thousand and sent the letter to The Enterprise although, on the inside, the letter was addressed to The Times. The Walkers consulted lawyers for advice, the Mayor backed down and the radio explained that finally the Walkers had succeeded in tracking down the figures for the Hatchitoches census, finding same in -- of all places, -- some community in Indiana, and that the figures given were something over thirteen thousand.

It is interesting that in 1940, the Parish numbered between 43 and 45 thousand people, in 1850 about 39 thousand and in 1960 about 35 thousand. I suppose the causes are many, not the least of which may be the fact that mechanization of the farms requires less workers, the lure of big cities, the racial racket constantly brewing and such like. In an ABC broadcast tonight, there was an editorial about the shift in population from many of the larger cities, -- Kansas City, Cleveland and so on. I assume much of this change may be due in part to better transportation, permitting urban workers to dwell in communities beyond the city limits of such industrial centers, say, as Detroit, whose population, also, is said to have dwindled in the last ten years.

I have a few things to do tonight before calling it a day but I'm hoping to do a dab of reading regardless. I find the Morrison biography of John Paul Jones goes haltingly but it's good as a source of information if not of entertainment and so I pursue it regardless.....

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Friday, June 3rd, 1960.

Memorandum: Hot summer and wonderfully dry.

I was slap happy today when the postman handed me a message from Lyme, indicating I was well. I can well imagine a billion circumstances preventing correspondence and always rest assured that I should much prefer making use of telepathy to the written word when things are buzzing at such a great rate nobody has a chance to set pen to paper.

I'm hobbling a little today but expect to be back to normalcy in the pedestrian role on the morrow. When I jumped out of bed this morning, my right foot felt just like my feet were want to feel when, as a child, I would attempt to high a jump and on landing, would feel a tingling on the bottom of my feet. I suppose I must have given myself a whack during the day that may have jarred the bone that forms the heel and so I have scuffled around with more sedateness today than is customary. I plan to do a bit of reading tonight and shall put some epsom salts in a bucket of hot water beside my machine so that I may stimulate my head with knowledge from the disc while I bring my foot around to normalcy by soaking it while I relax.

News from the direction continues promising for which I am thankful but the Grim Reaper is still at work in this neighborhood, I regret to say. A sister of May and Sam Balthazar died last night, at the family dwelling across the river and this morning about 3, my friend Robert Anthony, father of Doreatha and Little Robert, died quite unexpectedly. I think I mentioned years ago a Christmas supper at Robert's house on Little River and how the moon fashioned a halo above the tin roof of the cabin. It was one of those nights one always treasures in memory and, as I have always liked Robert and his family, I shall recall that Christmas Eve so vividly for ever.

Some friend of Blythe's, Madame Rougeot, called me from Alexandria this morning, saying she had some friends from Maine and heaven knows where all and might she come up for a go-round. She might and at 2:30.



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As I put down the receiver, the Esso folks called again to say their movie director was in the area again and might he get just a shot of the big house. He might, -- at 2. By some miracle, both the movie folks and the Alexandria people kept their appointments on time and so the afternoon sandwiched in nicely although I got scant pleasure in tramping about with a game foot. There was nobody to appear in the Esso thing and so I consented to walk from the upper gallery of the big house down into the garden, and from the door of the African House to somewhere or other and I think I didn't limp too much. The shoes were short and I never showed Esso either Yucca or Ghana.

It was nice hearing from Kay and James on their Anniversary although I know not why I used a big A. I sent James a tiny clock for his birthday, one which had come to me in my Christmas stocking from some youth of Waco, now a student at the University of Texas in Austin. I liked the little clock so much but it was so small and both the hands and the lettering or numerals so small and so fortified with protective coloration that I couldn't make out a thing when looking at it. I think it was a pretty clock and I'm going to be happy in thinking James could make out what I couldn't. I sent them some yellow roses for their anniversary and I was glad to hear that Miss Mah had done so nicely by them with ice cream and cake, both of which, not doubt fell into the home made section and probably was as delicious as only Miss Mah knows how to stir up.

I continue hearing nothing from the Rocket, scheduled for a visit last Sunday or Monday and no acknowledgement has come to hand from the last word as to the receipt of the copy I sent her at her request. Should I drop the Rocket a line, saying Mr. Draper of Esso had been here with movie equipment, I reckon she would come a-jumpin'.

And now to a bucket of hot water and the hope that it may put things to rights immediately so I may venture back to Little River for Robert's wake on Sunday night.....

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Sunday, June 5th, 1960.

# Memorandum:

Hot and dry.

On Saturday afternoon about 2, the artist called me to say she had just seen Madam Rand who had asked her to 'phone me to bid me come to sup at 6 at the camp. I got an identical message from the store at 5 when I passed that way to attend to some week end chores.

And so I sauntered across the cotton fields at 6, and, on reaching camp, paused for quarter of an hour to rest on the bench I shall always like best because of past associations.

A little later, I joined the ladies inside the camp, -- Blythe, Joan and Miriam Johnson and dine we did with such leisure and chatter that it was 9:45 before I arose to return to Yucca under a pleasant moon.

Naturally, I thought of little Miss Lee so often both before entering and all during the repast, for out of doors was grand and within the food delicious.

Gumbo of crab meat and shrimp constituted the resistance piece, flanked by grand punch and marvelous rolls. This was followed by a green salad with all sorts of stuff in it and no end of olives, pickles and such like on the side and all about. The dessert was as fine a dab of blue berry pie as I ever attacked and only regretted I was already giving way at the seams and simply couldn't undertake any of the other tasty morsels that surrounded this course.

Conversation was at once both sprightly and shallow although I did hear one or two things about June and husband I thought arresting, and of these points I shall speak at some subsequent sitting.



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The artist called me this morning to say her son, King Hunter, who lives in Cloutierville, had shot his wife in the leg above the knee. She said King had been taken to jail but was out again on bond while his wife was at some hospital where it was said her leg had been taken off below the knee, which seems odd if the shotgun blast struck above the knee.

As King's son, Brother, is in a Shreveport jail for shooting somebody up yonder in a bar brawl, it would appear the artist's family is quite in the thick of things. But the artist appears quite unruffled by such carryings-on and declares her children and grandchildren are old enough to know what they are doing and that she is glad she lives alone and so is not embroiled in all their performances.

Madam Regard was more animated today than any time during the past six months, Celeste says. She did not go for a ride because the lady doctor was bogged down in cases but the patient and her physician will be sailing up and down the road one day this week, it is expected. Everyone knowing anything about the case continues to marvel at the last minute reversal of the lady's health although, I believe, everyone assumes she will continue as a hospital patient.

I. S. Willard just called, --the hour being 10:30. She said she had intended calling me before as she had not left town as she had anticipated earlier in the week but leaves tomorrow at 5 A.M. for Baton Rouge and other places and may return this week end or the next or some time. She and her calendar are always like that. She didn't have much by way of news but spoke of some old Leslie magazines she had picked up while in Manhattan lately. I suppose they must have been of Civil War vintage for one carried a picture of Grand Ecore and another had the skyline of Natchitoches. I often wonder where she keeps her books, prints and water colors of which she has quite an extensive collection, I believe. One never sees evidences of them in her house but I'm sure they are there if one knew where to look. Forty years ago or so, she did quite a lot of sketching and many of the ancient buildings she caught in water color have since vanished. She says the Cane River Memo about trying to rescue the likenesses of places in the

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Monday, June 6th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and dry.

Today's plantation activities just about equalled those of any Paris department store on a Monday morning, -- no sign of life at all.

Monday morning is usually difficult for most of the ahns who have had a week end of frolic and so everyone seemed mighty pleased on Saturday when it was learned that Robert Anthony would be "funeralized" on Monday afternoon and that the plantation, accordingly, would not do any laboring at all today.

The magical hour set for the service was one o'clock and everyone assembled on Little River accordingly. The hearse was to bring the body from Natchitoches but it failed to appear on schedule and half an hour later came word that the hearse had broken down enroute and accordingly would be late, which it already was. But by 2:45, it pulled into sight and the services got under way but everyone was so exhausted, --the heat was almost 100 degrees, the actual doings were brief and the whole business brought to a prompt conclusion.

One of Robert's sons, currently at the Angola for a year, came up for his papa's funeral. The guard who came with him had to be back earlier than the delay of the hearse permitted and so there was some bustle after the final prayer. It was pitiful to see the little children of the prisoner weep when their papa had to be whisked away again, for somehow they had assumed he would be able to go home with them after the funeral. And so another old friend has been paid his final tribute and one hopes the season of "funeralizing" is finished for a long time.

Celeste's nephews, Joe and Dan Regard, drove up from New Iberia this afternoon, arriving here about 4:30, and went on to town to visit Madam Regard, their grandma. Joe's girl-friend came along. She and Joe will be married next Wednesday in New Iberia or Saint Martinsville or where ever. At coffee this morning, Celeste spoke of her plans to attend some of the festivities. She said she had given



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to remain here until Monday, giving her a chance to be with her  
mama and spend some time at the beautician's, etc., and  
then leave early-early Tuesday morning which ought to  
get her to her destination by noon, thus giving her 24  
hours before the services and then, perhaps, linger on a while  
for a day or two afterward.. I have no doubt a darling time  
is going to be had by all.

The longest days of the year come upon us at the same  
time the dry spell is in operation on this go-round and, as  
I do not believe in watering the vegetable garden until the  
sun's rays have been turned down, it is nearly 8  
o'clock before I accomplished this line of endeavor tonight.  
I am rather surprised that I should have such a constant  
companion in this enterprise in the person of my big young  
black cat who "sticketh closer than a brother," in  
spite of the occasional dashes of spray and drippings from the hose  
as he presses against my ankles as the work of  
a couple of hours goes on. For some reason, unlike all  
other cats I know, he doesn't seem to mind the occasional  
drenchings he gets and even seems regretful when the chore is  
finally finished.

As for the Ghana garden, one result of this supply of water  
is a truly remarkable growth and even the flowers are  
responding almost too briskly. The zinnias are  
already in flower and the corncomb is  
putting on buds although I had envisioned them  
as being at their best in October which I should prefer.  
I cut down the amount of moisture shot in their direction  
but even so they keep on trying to get ahead of the  
parade. Perhaps I shall be able to do for the floral points  
what I am already beginning to do for the various early rows  
of vegetables, --enjoy them and then re-plant for an  
autumn garden. If the season keeps going at  
its present rate, it appears I shall be celebrating Labor  
Day by laboring at putting in a new assortment of  
vegetables and flowers for the edification of Ghana  
in mid October.

The enclosure from Eve Wood calls for an immediate response to  
advise her no Louisiana iris are available at the moment.

I send her the En erprise as a Christmas item because  
she likes to keep up with doings in the otum where she formerly lived a  
she, in r turn, sends me Look Magazine on subscription, a magazine  
I never get to open before passing it on to local  
friends who don't have magazines. From James, it would appear  
he is back on the track in correspondence and I must get off a  
note to him although I am pressed for time, having a column  
to do before folding up my beard. Thus runeth out the day and

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Tuesday, June 7th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Partly cloudy and hot. Some place got  
8 inches of rain this morning but we are promised  
we aren't likely to get any within the foreseeable  
future.

I'm glad today's mail appears to contain  
little or nothing of interest for the way the pattern of the day  
unfolded, I never was able to make opportunity for  
exploration coincide with the presence of secretaries.

J. H. had invited the Public Relations Director of Louisiana  
Power and Light of New Orleans to dine here. It was  
thought the man, one Rhodes, and wife would break bread at  
the big house with us but Celeste decided they should  
eat at her house. And so we contented ourselves at  
the big house with the manager of Rural Electric and the director  
the Pecane Experimental station at Shreveport. When  
the New Orleans husband and wife appeared next door, they unfolded  
three offspring and so, instead of getting two for dinner,  
Celeste got five.

A tour for the people was arranged for 1:30 but Mr. Rhodes and  
two of his offspring went with J. H. to look over the  
plantation and it was 2:30 before they got back. In  
the midst of the Rhodes tour, and it turned out  
the Rhodes contingent was as interested in a tour as my  
cat would be in a pocketbook, the artist arrived, saying there  
were people at her house who hoped to see me. I called them  
when the Rhodes thing had finished and the people  
turned out to be neighbors of Mrs. Spinks of Crockett, Texas  
and another tour got under way for that group.

I liked the Crockett people whose name is Wright.



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Charles continues sharing his enthusiasms about his August nuptials and the prospective bride, Mrs. Ruth Nichols, of Baton Rouge was here last week end and purchased a lot on the east bank of Cane River in town, paying fifteen thousand dollars for same to its owner, J. H. Williams. From this, I assume the building of the ultra modernistic house will be getting under way almost any time.

Carmen told me that when Mrs. Nichols and party were up from Baton Rouge for the light festival last December, Charles entertained them at his house. The mink coat of Mrs. Nichols was left on the back of a chair in the living room when she and the other guests had retired. Early next morning, the old servant of the Cunningham ménage, awakened Charles early-early, explaining that "Your old dog is sleepin' of that thar lady's racoon cape". Perhaps in the new, ultra modernistic home, there will be new and ultra modernistic dogs that will not pull lady's fine mink coats from chairs and make racoon blankets on the floor to sleep on.

The son-in-law of the operator of the honkey-tonk up the road a piece dropped dead in New Orleans last evening and as the honkey-tonk is one of the members of the party line to which I am connected, I haven't been able to get a call through, in-coming or out-going, until 11:15 tonight when Mrs. Walker succeeded, seeking my assistance on an article she is doing for this week's Enterprise about the restoration of the old school adjoining the Bishopric. Mrs. Walker writes so well, it seemed odd she ran into difficulties with the account of the old building but, as she explained, she has done so much of other types of reporting that writing about old buildings is something in which her experience has been limited. It was obvious she was exhausted and I accordingly did little tinkering with the script as it was read to me although it seemed to me it might have been twisted toward greater perfection had the hour been earlier and the lady less tired, and I don't suppose this notice will make much difference anyway.

There was a great rattling of thunder bolts in the heavens along about 5 o'clock this evening and I hoped we might get a dab of the 8 inches of moisture that fell this morning on some little old town in central Texas but

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Wednesday, June 8th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and sultry.

This is the day, according to legend, that the presence of rain will insure rain for the succeeding forty days. Atmospheric conditions turned out to be just perfect both for those who didn't want forty days of rain and those, if there be any, who did. With considerable rumbling in the skies, a few drops fell about 4:30 this afternoon but not enough to make anyone seek shelter or slow up whatever work on which they might be engaged while half way between here and Bermuda, there was quite a shower. It was so much like the involved pronouncement by the Delphic oracle that anyone could read into the signs anything he pleased and for an impersonal thing like the weather, that really does seem to be quite an accomplishment.

During the past week or two, I have heard comparatively few CBS news casts and I'm beginning to wonder if announcements have been made or are likely to be made shortly regarding the plans of E. Roscoe Murrow and his next resumption of regular broadcasting. As I recall, it was said in June last year that E. R. M. would be taking a twelve month's leave of absence but return to the microphone on July 1st of this year. I recall that at the time I guessed that this date would proceed the two political conventions so that we might look forward to his reporting on those two impending events. I hold the thought that E. R. M. will indeed be resuming his post so that all of us may automatically feel a little better informed than we have been during his year of comparative silence.

And mention of the convention leads me to say how glad I am that Mr. Rockefeller is, at last, beginning to put a little life into the Republican segment of the forth-coming campaign. My guess is that

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first of all, Richard more truly represents the  
Republican Party, especially in its admitted conservatism  
and concern over big money and secondly, that Richard already  
has the convention, made up of ultra conservatives,  
well sewed up and that Mr. Rockefeller hasn't got a chance  
to become standard bearer this time around. So be it, and  
the country will be the poorer.

I did hear something about the majority of Scripps-  
Howard newspapers editorializing in favor of Senator  
Johnson in the Democratic field. Well, for all I  
care, Scripps-Howard can have Mr. Johnson for,  
to my way of thinking, he is probably the most conservative  
of all the prospective Democratic aspirants for the nomination  
and probably stands about where Nixon does in the Republican  
Party. We shall be poor, indeed, if the  
electorate is offered a choice of  
Nixon or Johnson. Personally, I'm not craving either.

Everything was lovely over the coffee cups this morning,  
what with plans going forward for the frolic in  
New Iberia this coming week. One interesting aside during  
the chit-chat, was to the effect that in view of hospitaliza-  
tion costs, mine hostess simply couldn't afford to contribute  
anything to the fund being raised to defray refurbishing costs  
of the Seminary Building. As I have never manifested the  
slightest hint that I, myself, had the vaguest notion as  
to how people should spend money, and especially people  
with ample funds, I thought even the mention of the  
restoration matter was both out of line and  
untimely. Morning at 4:40, the old woodpecker,  
called "peckerwood" in the Cane River country, began  
thundering away madly on the sheet of tin  
covering one of the chimney tops at Yucca, and  
the rumble coming out of the fireplace into the  
boudoir was enough to wake the dead and even  
the sleepy living of which, again at this hour, I am one.....

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Thursday

Wednesday, June 9th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Continued hot and dry. But a lovely breeze from  
the northeast, slap out of Lyme, it would seem, made the  
warmth so pleasant and the ozone so bracing.

It was the breeze, brining a breath of fresh air  
out of Lyme that set the seal of happiness on the entire day.  
I have never received such a beautifully phrased message  
straight from the heart and I'm grateful to God for  
it and its composer.

I relished every word, every phrase, every nuance, every  
thought and I know not how to express my gratitude adequately  
except to say Bless Your Heart.

I pause for a moment to listen. The moon is  
up and one of the girls must be playing tricks on Dot who  
is complaining to the moon. I know that cats have a bad reputation  
for nocturnal serenades but never until recently did  
I realize peacocks seem able to go them one better, what  
with the carrying power of their voices. I can't  
recall if I mentioned what I overheard on that score the  
other morning when I was on one side of the bamboo hedge and  
a couple of tractor drivers were on the other, neither of them  
obviously having seen me. Dot had made a racket when the  
tractors paused in the shade of a pecan tree and one of  
the drivers inquired of the other:

"What sort of a varmit is that that Mr.  
Lestan have what makes such a racket that it done woke me up las'  
night and now I'se hearin' it again."

I was happy to retrace the years today, thanks to the facile pen  
of little Miss Lee. Never have I been so delicately conducted  
on such a lovely souvenir journey and the memory of it will  
remain with me for always.



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At coffee this morning, mine hostess remarked that her husband was spending the day in New Orleans and would be back early tonight and that she might as well get used to being alone in the house and that, besides, she could always reach me on the phone. I allowed as how the phone is really a wonderful instrument. Gladly do I devote 12 to 14 hours a day to furthering what I can for the people and the place where I dwell but it seems to me it would be shortsighted to add more hours to those daily expended when road running remains such a propensity on the part of my associates.

And somehow this brings to mind the last paragraph on the first page of the June 5th memo. At camp on Saturday night, my hostess in that establishment on the previous evening had mentioned something about which I mentioned in the June 5th memo that I would touch upon at a subsequent sitting. My guess is that the merchant-planter must not know that confidence is one thing about which my Saturday night hostess knows nothing about. In any event, she said he had told her that his younger brother, a devotee of the bottle, "has a cirrhosis of the liver problem" and that the elder brother doesn't expect the youngest to remain more than 5 or 6 months. I must say this news greatly startled me. Everyone says that the youngest brother has a poor color but that didn't seem surprising. At the same time, I recall the phrase, --often quoted by their mama, to wit that not even the angels in Heaven can tell the appointed hour, and at the same time I remembered the finality with which Madam Regard's case had been written off in advance, only to have all prognostications proven wrong. Assuming that, except for physicians, perhaps only the merchant-planter may know about the seriousness of his brother's condition. If he wants to keep the information alike from patient and public, he certainly made a mistake or at least took a mighty big risk in confiding the news to the person he did.

As soon as today's C. R. Memo hit the street today, several people called, asking if they or I, or both, might not do well to send the idea of a cotton history on film to the Department of Commerce and Industry with a view to that Department sponsoring such a production. In each instance, I stated I thought the Cotton Council should be the one to sponsor such a thing. I shall send a clipping to the Rocket from whom I have heard nothing, let her do whatever she pleases, --or nothing, if she hasn't time. I have quite a lot of desk work ahead of me.

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Friday, June 10th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid with little air stirring except for the lovely breeze from Lyme that blew this way yesterday and will serve for ever to make life seem to worth living.

Today's post was scant and secretaries scanted, what with much hoeing going on in the fields and much frolic up the road tonight.

Tonight about 9, a friend who doesn't read dropped in to say howdy and we sat for a while on the bench by St. Giggins' fountain and watched the fire flies dashing about with their little lanterns, sailing through the white ribbon grass around the big old sun dial and twinkling softly among the leaves of the big old magnolias by the chapel and the other balancing room at the other end of the gallery. It was all so very peaceful and so very pleasant and it goes without saying my thoughts were flowing mightily in the direction of Lyme.

For some reason, known only to themselves, all three peacocks were a-stir by 4:30 this morning when I stepped out on the gallery, heading for the vegetable garden to do a bit of weeding and guiding of gourd vines in the adjacent garden. I paused long enough to give them their breakfast and, on my return to Yucca about 7, I noticed that one of the girls had broken fast, as it were and was returning from the front of the house to the secret garden. I noted her course and this afternoon while she was with the other two in the white garden, I re-traced my steps of 7 o'clock and discovered her nest under a nandina bush in which three eggs were resting. The girls look so much alike, I cannot tell one from the other and so I know not if it is this be the same girl who had her nest under the old magnolia broken up or if it be the other. Usually most of our feathered friends will, by some magic of Nature, suddenly begin laying again if something breaks up their first nest and so it may be that this is a repeat performance of the original setter or an initial undertaking on the part of the other, but which ever it is, it is good to know they are contemplating be-getting some offspring.

It is pleasant to be able to report that J. H.'s throat seems to have returned to normalcy. He remains as busy as ever and the erratic dotings in Shre report never seems to let up. Before



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the incredible jaunt to Philadelphia by Dr. Wenk and John, J. H. and Steve were asked to cast about to find a suitable job for John for the summer. It was thought some hospital job might be a good thing since John is a pre-med student. And so Mandeville was contacted at just the time the new Administration is getting new staff and operational matters installed and apparently the requested job had been lined up when a letter arrived today from Shreveport, blandly announcing that John had taken a job at the Confederate Memorial hospital in Shreveport. Such minor announcements as first trying to secure a job and then, having done so, secondly having to play that nobody really wanted it anyway must be worrisome, especially for those who are so busy with so many matters of such varying range.

I don't recall if the cistern in back of Ghana shows in the snapshot Irma O'Brien took. If it does, you may recall that it is square. About 3 o'clock this afternoon, a couple of carpenters who had busy at barn building were sent to me to see if I had anything for them to do the balance of the day. I did. And before day was done, they had constructed a bench running all around the cistern. It gives the place an inviting appearance and my guess is that many a pilgrim will enjoy resting there in days to come.

At coffee this morning, talk fell on a variety of subjects, not the least being the people we all like best. Mine hostess observed that she had seen Frances Phelps one day this week and that Frances is still talking about the Lady from Lyme and how the aforesaid Lady from Lyme strikes her as the sweetest person she has ever met. Nothing gives more pleasure that hearing one's own sentiments expressed by others, especially in cases having to do with personalities. I must say that the coffee hour was wonderful pleasant for me today.

I dropped the Rocket a note yesterday, enclosing the Cane River Memo pointing out that since the zinnias would be engulfing the garden peace in the Ghana circle within another 10 days and that accordingly, I proposed getting a photo of it, I wondered if it would be asking too much to have someone drop me a postcard, saying Yes or No regarding the possibility of passing this way within the aforesaid 10 days. I reckon I ought to know such messages are merely singing psalms to a dead mule, so far as the likelihood of eliciting a response but I sent it regardless and within a week, shall begin casting about for someone with a likely camera if no word come through from where ever,

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Sunday, June 12th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A lovely hot, dry week end.

It seems awfully ante bellum tonight, too, with what with the gentle flame of the remnant of my Christmas candle being Yucca's only rival of the countless fire flies outside.

I went across the fence to sup about 7, turning off the electric fan on my departure. On my return the fan didn't respond to the switch. Nothing else responded either. But the Christmas candle is doing just fine to provide a holiday glow and I shall be getting the 10 o'clock news regardless, thanks to my birthday gift which has already served me once before today at Ghana when, early this morning, it accompanies me there to provide me with news at dawn. As for the lamp on the post at the side gate seems to be working alright as, indeed, is the African House illumination, it must be that a fuse blew out in the house only, for we are all on the same current. But if my margins seem unusually Denalme-ish, charge that off to the ways of life when the source of so much convenience suddenly comes to a halt.

On Saturday afternoon, I was in the Ghana garden about 3:30 when I heard someone call. It was Sterling Evans with three fine gentlemen who are visiting the Evanses at Little Eva this week end.

Sterling said the purpose of the invitation to dine with them on Saturday night was based on the fact that it had been too long since we had broken bread together. My guess was that too but the Evanses had guests whom they thought they would entertain by calling in their Cane River neighbors to the extent of one at Melrose and another in town by the name of Norman Fletcher. Be that as it may, I lied promptly, swearing I had just accepted an invitation to dine with the Rands at their Veterans camp, --and I had no reason to suppose there would be anyone there this week end but that was the best excuse for declining I could think of at the moment. I showed the gentlemen Ghana and the African House and Sterling asked if



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his guests might see the cotton stencil at Yucca. They might. Picture my surprise when reaching Yucca, I discovered on the gallery none other than Blythe, Joan and the latter's sister-in-law, I made presentations and somehow this seemed to confirm the story I had told. Before leaving, Sterling tried to buy the originals of the note paper illustrations but they weren't here.

Half an hour after their departure, Blythe fell slap over one of the big benches when she went to step up on one for a better view of something or other, sprawling on the ground on the other side. I was shocked, remembering how she had broken her shoulder a few years back and it looked to me as though she had landed right on it. But she seemed alright and headed back for Alexandria half an hour later in gay spirits. I phoned her this morning but could not get her. The operator tried a couple of hours later, and I was glad to tell by her voice that she was alright and had suffered not at all from her misadventure. She said she had heard the phone earlier this morning but had been working in the garden and was planning to come up to the camp later today with some of Horace Rand's family.

I. S. Willard called at 3:15 this afternoon to ask if the weather was suitable for some pictures. I thought it was. She came about 4:30 or 5 and took several and had much pleasant conversation to join me in. She is certainly a kind person but finishing a sentence does seem difficult for her and too often I get lost as the subject moves so rapidly from point to point.

Last night I read a little more from the Paul Jones biography and even got the man into the Navy of Catherine the Great. It won't be long if I persist, before I shall have completed the book which has certainly taken me long enough to wade through. I had thought of finishing it tonight but the reading machine doesn't get far on one candle power.....

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Monday, June 13th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A half inch of rain, slow and pleasant between 5 and 11 this morning and everybody seemed to like it. When the sun came out and nobody needed that but we got it regardless and thereby lost much of the value of the rain. Every day the Weather Bureau talks about partly cloudy weather with widely scattered showers, but nothing has come of the moisture section until today. The forecast is the same for the morrow and every one hopes the showers will put in an appearance again.

At coffee this morning, mine hostess opined that her husband was as nervous as she was last night when a long distance call came through on their phone, the operator stating that the call was for Mrs. Wenk. Nobody had heard she contemplated a visit down this way and so a call was put through to her husband who said she wasn't at home.

She put in an appearance early this afternoon, promising to honor us with a visit through Wednesday, after which she will journey further south as far as Baton Rouge to visit her brother. Whether she plans stopping off in Alexandria or not wasn't stated. She is traveling by car. It is assumed her license, revoked in the Spring, has not been returned to her. It all seems to simmer as the potentials of a pretty kettle of fish.

I was at the store this morning when the first drops of rain began falling, being there early to see about electricians to investigate where the Yucca current might be hiding. Fugabou and Ezra who are the local experts in that field put in new fuses which blew out promptly. They then disconnected everything in the house and continued their search, getting precisely no where. I was busy in the drizzle with gourd vines and so did



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not see them when they departed. I learned at noon that they had given up the job as hopeless and that J. H. had decided to have Yucca re-wired and a professional electrician was sent for. He did not put in an appearance today, however and so the telephone and typewriter tonight is working in the dark and the reading machine and ice box are not working but my birthday gift is doing just fine. Surely you will agree a more timely gift could never have been selected

Through design, I have left the house in the same uproar it presented when Fugabou and Ezra got through pulling things around. With no electric fans working and no lights except the Christmas candle, I think any visitor will be discouraged from prolonging any calls and by the time the professional electricians take over, I suppose the hubbub will be even greater, just the sort of disorder that ought to go far in staying off tumult so that, for once in my life, I am not complaining.

Today's post brought a package from the gentleman heading the Wright contingent from Crockett, Texas, last Tuesday. My secretary reads his name on the return address as Dehl Wright, which is the first time I ever heard of anyone bearing the name Dehl although L Chockley's first name approaches it in Del, although, if I remember correctly, her real name is O'dell, or some such. The package was in the nature of a sport shirt in all kinds of checkerboard effect. Personally, I love plain sport shirts about the brown of a soldier's uniform but I am told by people that nobody likes a solid color without design. This seems odd and may or may not be true. Be that as it may, the Crockett checkerboard is too much for me but it will serve some good cause none the less. At this moment, the peacocks are complaining about the darkness, I guess, but they probably don't use the touch system on their machines.....

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10574

Tuesday, June 14th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Full summer, tempered by a pleasant breeze that died at sundown.

Poor old gray Grandpa, faithful companion in death as in life, selected as his final resting place the spot right under the floor where my desk stands so that he might be as close as possible. During the day while the breezes kept the air circulating, one didn't remark so much upon the site but when the air ceased circulating, the aroma of Grandpa started coming up through the floor and tonight I am missing the advantages of electric current which might have taken over the chore of the day's breeze and so made my boudoir less Oriental, atmospherically speaking.

Electricians came this afternoon but they were of the variety that deal only in R. E. A. high power lines and although they fiddled with some stuff in the garden, they never so much as set foot in Yucca. I am told local electricians in the persons of Ezra and Fugabou will start the re-wiring on the morrow and I hold the thought they may make sufficient progress so that by the week end, there may be a measure of electric current available.

There's nothing of much interest in today's post but I send along a sampling regardless. I so much like what James had to tell about the martin's that I think I shall use the material as something around which I shall knock off an article tonight in the dark for next Thursday's column. This Thursday's column, by the way, entitled a Dilly, will have to do with the Confederate flag and I treated the whole subject so flippantly, I am expecting to receive lots of fat brickbats when the paper hits the street on Thursday morning. I shall give the martin's a twist tonight, too, that will probably inject enough racial consideration on the side as to find little favor with the hide bound.



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Celeste got off for New Iberia between 7 and 8 and Sister is staying across the fence at J. H.'s request. She came to see me this afternoon and seemed more normal than I can ever remember. I am told that she has definitely left her husband. She told me that her brother, Dan, is suffering from cirrhosis of the kidney and liver and that the doctors say he can live about two years if he takes good care of himself and about six months if he keeps on drinking. I manifested surprise at such news and, recalling to her the case of Madam Regard, remarked on the adage that not even the angels in Heaven can foretell man's day and hour. Sister mentioned having visited June on her recent trip to Alexandria. She said she is a nice girl but one with whom one never can feel close,-- a statement to which I did not fully subscribe. Smile.

I talked on the 'phone with I. S. Willard tonight. She said she got off the Sunday films to the developer on Monday. I asked her if I might borrow the black and white films if they turned out successfully, thinking I might impose on little Miss Lee about having a glossy print or two made if they turned out to be suitable for newspaper reproduction. I doubt very much if I. S. Willard has the proper camera to turn out color film up to reproduction standard for the Picayune but I thought that if the black and white came out fairly clear, I might send one to Warren to give him some notion as to the layout and some hint as to how the thing might appear in a transparency. I wrote the Rocket last Friday, asking her to fetch along a color film, should she chance to be coming this way within a limited time but, of course, I haven't heard anything from her as yet. The point of the letter was to give her a date when the Spring phase of the garden would be at its best and pointing out there will be another period in deep summer when another phase might be used if she should not get around until then. In the event I do not see her within the next 10 days or so, I shall ask a Hatchitoches professional to take a lick at the thing.

I thought perhaps if the I. S. W. black and white turned out nicely, I might send one to the Enterprise for use, if possible, in the folder they may make of the Chana s

10576

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Wednesday, June 15th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Deep summer.

I write rather later than usual but withal in vast physical comfort.

The professional electricians having failed to appear, the plantation electricians took over at dawning and by dint of much doings, re-wired the entire house today so that tonight I have a vast current of air sailing Grandpa from beneath my desk up and out of the window and ice cubes are in the making for subsequent refreshment.

I don't know if you have ever had the adventure of having an old house re-wired, but if so, you may well imagine what it is like and if you haven't, there's little point in trying to rehearse the business. Suffice it is to say that all the former wiring has to be taken out, baseboards torn out but cannot be done until armchairs, chests of drawers and the Lord knows what all removed and then the re-wiring begun and all the stuff put back. With the thermometer in the mid or upper 90's and no breeze by God or by man available, the job was dehydrating, to say the least.

But now all is ship-shape once more, I think, and in any event, I am enjoying the cool stirring of air, the absence of Grandpa's souvenir and the promise of some cold water in the offering.

When things were reaching quite a pitch this morning, Sister came to see me and I entertained her out of doors on a bench. She left her car at Melrose and traveled to Baton Rouge by bus. She pointed out that her car was old and she didn't want to drive it down yonder. If the car, which looks alright, could be driven from Shreveport here, I have no doubt it could go the balance of the way but the real reason, I am sure, is the fact that she is driving without a license and could take a chance getting down here from home without going through too many large communities whereas Alexandria and Baton Rouge might present something more inevitable as a hazard. She plans to stay a week or



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two down yonder. I suppose she may take this opportunity to find a place in New Roads for a dwelling which is certainly crack-pot enough but, it is said, she and the doctor are separating once and for all which may or may not be true. How is it possible to figure on a Mexican jumping bean not jumping or which way it will jump. One of the reasons she had come to see me was to ask if she might return the several dozen pictorial plates she had purchased from me two or three years ago. It seems to me that is quite a long time for one to return merchandise for full credit but, again, how does one anticipate the doings of a jumping bean.

There was a big row, lasting for a couple of hours tonight at the home of Mitchell, the are. Among other things, he broke a chair over his wife's head but that didn't floor her, it would seem. A little later, however, she had a stroke and so the lady doctor was summoned and off to the hospital and so deep summer settles over the countryside and life goes on its old and reckless way.

Carmen called me this afternoon for a chat but I made it short, what with the hurly-burly of the electricians and carpenters going on about me with so much gusto. Carmen said she and her sister were going down to the Lester Hughes camp at 3 o'clock and that they would be joined at 7 by an equal number of husbands. As Carmen is a maiden lady, I didn't ask her about her husband. Perhaps she rounded up somebody like Charles.

I suppose it must have been an old armadillo or some such that got into the peacocks nest last night and broke up all the eggs and pulled many a feather from the bird. I haven't seen any of the peacocks all day but have heard them out in the pear trees and I hold the thought that all three may be there. I sent a helper to look for them and received a report that one male and one female were up in the old pecan tree at the end of the garden but the second hen could not be located, but then neither could its corps so I hold the thought it may have survived the on-slaught of last night and had found a cool shade place to rest in.

And now I think the ice cubes must have pretty well formed

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Thursday, June 16th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Fair and hot, except for a grand breeze that assisted in evaporation out of doors. Tonight, praise the Lord, the electric current is functioning and so an efficient fan makes my boudoir a veritable cave of the winds and it's pleasant.

I slept soundly last night but put in an hour at gardening this morning before 6 when I undertook putting the interior of Yucca back together again and had the place fairly ship-shape before 9.

I returned to gardening this afternoon, after a few interruptions around noon and so it wasn't until tonight I learned the President, although so close, is not going to Japan. I know not when this decision was made as I missed news both this morning and this noon and it wasn't until tonight that I began getting caught up on what's going on in the world during the past 24 hours, and so much seems happening around the globe with a day at this stage of things.

Having been out of the house so much today, I know not if today's Cane River Memo upset any un-Reconstructed Rebels or not. Somebody mentioned there was a letter below today's column referring to same but I shall not get an opportunity to explore same until the morrow. I assume the letter was favorable or the Enterprise wouldn't have printed same although the paper is wider in latitude than most newsprint sheets.

And speaking of newspapers, the Shreveport Times find Kennedy and Johnson out in front for delegates at the Democratic convention. I continue to hold the thought the former Governor of Illinois may carry off the palm but that doesn't seem so likely at the present moment.



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A night or two ago I did a piece for next Thursday's paper wherein I mentioned something about my intention to put up another house for the martins. This afternoon, Alton's papa came this way to see if there was something he might do to fill out his day of plantation labor. I trotted out a bird s house his son had fashioned for me in the style of the African House a few years ago and the proud parent erected a pole on top of which the bird house would rest. I had expressed hope, as I recall, that I would not be long in noting the new house would be tenanted but I was quite unprepared to notice that as soon as the pole with the house on top was elevated and before it was made secure in the ground, a pair of martins swooped down from somewhere, as though to inspect the new housing unit even before it was finished. This is the fourth birdhouse in the Ghana section and what with three of them already inhabited, I haven't a doubt that tomorrow at dawning, I shall see the fourth unit being occupied.

Celeste returned from New Iberia this evening but I did not see her but shall probably be brought up to date about the wedding festivities in New Iberia over the coffee cups in the morning.

Tonight the Association of Hysterical Ladies are entertaining at the old Lemee House by way of greeting all the local officials elected in the last pole punching contest. --Mayyor and on down the line. I shouldn't be surprised if this may be the first time a flock of the Parish politicians ever heard of either the Association or the old house and, if any of them attend, they probably will have forgotten all about same by another dawning since it probably means little or nothing to them ~~then~~ them in their primary scheme of life, making money. I suppose I may expect a phone report or two later tonight from such as Thelma, Carmen, I. S. Willard, Mme. Walker or such like and I, for one, am delighted I declined the invitation of each to provide transportation. Receptions, at best, are so much better to hear about than participate in.....

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Friday, June 17th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot-hot but tempered by a brisk breeze out of the east to assist in evaporation and to waft Grandpa westward instead of vertically which is a great help in present desk work.

A likeness of Durer to hand by today's post, advising me that little Miss Lee was taking off from the margin of the oen for a brief moment but planned to be back at Lyme by today. I hold the thought the outing may have provided novelty if not rest.

I like Durers to keep me posted as to how things turn. They make such dandy fillers between opportunities for longer communions.

This morning, one lingered over the coffee cups a little longer than usual but not doing much about the wedding but rather complaining about a fate that made batteries uncertain when a lady wants to be absolutely sure her Cadillac is working properly which was the big item, and, secondly, how a sister and the lady-doctor thought it would be alright for mother to visit at the sister's home for a while, thereby cutting down hospital expenses. I was rather startled by a phrase which must have been uttered in a momentary forgetfulness, --"you may think we are rich but hospitalization cost a lot of money". --a song which is being sung frequently in town, I have been told. Well, anyhooooooo, hospitals are expensive but it isn't fair for a sister and a physician to suggest a visit, etc., etc., etc., and the coffee wasn't exactly a success for at least one participant in the klotch but gave the other participant a deal of satisfaction in the sheer pleasure of blowing off steam, I believe.

An hour later, Mitchell, the are, passed this way, asking me if I would 'phone the hospital to inquire how his wife was doin'. The hospital connected me with his wife's room and I found myself talking with the daughter who was with her mama and so I put Mitchell on the wire. After he had talked a minute or two, he said someone wanted to speak to me and, Lo! there was the lady doctor who



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had chanced to be in the room. She appeared quite gay and said she was threatening to come to see me, having heard I was limping and not taking care of myself. I told her that that was an excuse I was using to avoid getting tangled up in social affairs and I did not tell her I knew where she got the information which was, I am sure, from the Walkers who had invited me to be their guest at the Country Club tonight for an early swim and a prolonged shrimp dinner, both of which I should have liked had I not preferred "staying put" to do a day of weeding. It's so much trouble getting rigged up in Country Club raiment that I find easier to remain behind the bushes in my kakis.

This afternoon some ladies of Natchitoches whom Celeste had asked me to receive, brought with them some artichokes, ready for eating, each wrapped in foil. I left all but one at Celeste's and attacked the one I brought home with me. I like the vegetable but I never ate one prepared just this way. It had been boiled, after which an excellent sauce with a cheese ingredient had been poured over the whole thing, the whole thing served cold. It was an adventure eating it, as you may well imagine, what with each petal being covered with a thin coating of hardened butter-cheese sauce. The end of the petal one nibbles on had sauce almost on it although most of the sauce, naturally, remained on all the part of each petal one does eat. And, of course, when one reached the end of the petals and had scooped out the stuff from the base of the thing, there wasn't any sauce much left for the main or body part of the vegetable but there was lots of sauce on one's fingers, hands, arms, face and even some on my stoack which, fortunately, had been uncovered as I had been shirtly, sitting on the gallery to get out of range of a Grandpa aroma. It was pleasant to be able to jump into the tub readily enough after such a bout with a harmless looking vegetable.

And so another week runs out and so a quiet week end appears to be just in the offing, but more about that shortly. Again my thanks for the Durer message and may fine weather and a tangy breeze from the deep provided a bracer for little Miss Lee.....

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Sunday, June 19th, 1960.

Memorandum:

As I understand it, summer isn't scheduled to arrive for a couple of days but it appears to me it has actually been here for sometime and the skies remain clear, the temperatures high.

I got a little reading done on Saturday night and I was glad to be able to finish the J. P. Jones biography. It is grand that somebody has done such a thorough job and the research it reveals will supply another biographer of John Paul with guide lines of vast help when somebody gets around to do another biography of the naval hero in a more readable style.

I had never read anything about the Jones adventures in Russia and so was particularly interested in that phase of the story. It was pleasant to run into a familiar name on the guest list of a dinner party given on one of the Russians battleships during the Russo-Turkish war in the person of Prince de Ligne. It has been so long since I read the de Ligne memoirs that I have forgotten any reference to Jones if de Ligne did, indeed, mention him.

Jones returned from Russia to Paris in 1789 or 1790, and remained in Paris for the balance of his life which came within --the end came within a couple of years. He had had so many friends in Paris at Versailles, it is arresting that he never seems to have concerned himself about them when the Ancien Regime was going through its final convulsions. One gathers from this biography that Jones, a remarkable naval hero, was primarily concerned with Jones which may account for his lack of concern about so many of those in jeopardy whom he had counted as friends in the 1780's.

I hold the thought the week end at Lyme was as quiet as it was here. I must say it is remarkable that I saw no pilgrim today although there were a few yesterday.

Quite a few of my friends passed this way this afternoon, however, and nobody seemed to have remarked that today was June 19th,



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and I said nothing about it. Grandually the old custom of making the 19th one of frolic seems to have been tapering off in recent years. The fact that he fell on a Sunday this year probably has furthered forgetfulness about this vanishing holiday about which nobody seems to know any reason for its inception in the first place.

Tomorrow will be the 12th day since I wrote the Rocket, remarking that if she should chance to be in this neighborhood, she might want to get a shot at the Ghana garden if she wants to get a maximum of color for the spring aspect of the place. It will be pretty in autumn but it will be too late then to engineer a transparency onto the Dixie-Roto. Up to the present writing, I haven't heard a peep out of the afroesaid Rocket and I'm accordingly glad I. S. Willard got a couple of likenesses of the place when she did. I talked with I. S. W. this week end and she says the black and white photos came out fairly well. I have asked I. S. W. to return the negatives to the Alexandria studio where she had them developed and asked that orgian zation to make a glossy or two in order that I may send one to Lyme, --later in the week,--I trust, and a black and white to Warren to give him some notion as to what the place looks like.

I strolled across the fence about 7 tonight to sup there. The folks weren't back from town as yet but le Pere Antoine whom I hadn't seen in months passed that way and we chatted until the host and hostess arrived. Le Pere had beer while we broke bread and later, following a chat on the front gallery, le Pere saw me back to Yucoa, he thinking his flashlight a better aid for negotiating the gardens than the stars by which I usually set my course.

I somehow hadn't heard the daughter-in-law of the President was with him on his Far Eastern tour until this morning when it was reported the car in which Mrs. John Eisenhower was riding in Korea stalled. It was certainly pleasant hearing Mrs. Roosevelt on a broadcast out of Washington tonight. It is always such a pleasure to hear her.....

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Monday, June 20th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Lovely and hot.

I started the day off in the paint pots, what with four new benches to be given a couple of coats of white paint. Thanks to the dry air, I got both coats applied before the day was done and the benches distributed about the gardens. They look ghostly white amidst so much fresh greenery but withal quite pretty and will provide a resting place for many a tired pilgrim in the season ahead, I hope.

The post contained uite an assortment of letters of not much interest, I think. Only one secretary put in an appearance but we did not take up the mail for the secretary had brought a friend or kinsman with him, a youth of high school age, and it seemed to me more important to me to share the more interesting features of Melrose with him than to attend to secondary mail.

The youth who lives in some remote section of the Parish and seems never to have been anywhere, demonstrated an education, an interest in things and a personality that was once arresting and refreshing. What made a profound impression on me what his remark, after viewing various Hunters in the boudoir, opining as he did that he liked the pictures so much, even though it was evident the artist couldn't draw but possessed such a wonderful color sense. Such a casual reaction from a high school youth who has probably never heard of Art criticism struck me as remarkable. I immediately invited him to see the African House murals and he was entranced with all he had to see. He was wearing a pert new straw hat with two ostrich plumes stuck in the band at a 45 degree angle. He removed his hat in deference to the murals that so delighted him.

Somebody w somewhere was waiting to take him to him home and so he had to leave before getting as far as the Ghana murals but although pressed for time, he was generous enough to take the place of the secretary who had been called away, saying he thought it unfair for me to have given him time to see such interesting things and no one helping me with the letters. I expect to have adequate assistance on the morrow anyway and to me it seemed so important that this



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Monday, June 20th, 1960

Memorandum

For the file

soul should have an opportunity to drink in what obviously pleased him so much and filled him with so much wonder

I had a call from the Newcomb Studios of Alexandria this morning. It is the place I. S. Willard uses for handling films. I had asked Newcomb to print the shot of Ghana which Irma had taken and they had processed and they called for some additional instructions. I. S. W. had told me that Newcomb of Alexandria is a name selected by the two ladies she knew who had been students at her Alma Mater, Sophie Newcomb of Tulane, and that after college, they, that is the two girls, one being named Sutter, and I know not the other's, had decided to buy the Alexandria studio with the Newcomb name and have been operating there ever since. The one on the phone sounded pleasantly civilized and I invited her and her partner to make a round up this way when circumstances permitted for instinctively I felt that like the ebony number of even date, they, too, would find much to delight their souls at this bend of the river.

At coffee this morning, my neighbor mentioned she had some color slide films to be taken before her films could be processed, -- the others having been shot at the recent New Iberia wedding. She wished she could find some zinnias in flower, and as Ghana offered an amplitude, she took camera in hand and marched in that direction. Along the way she expressed the wish that the Rocket would again instruct her about determining when one is in the presence of a subject suitable for photographing. I have heard this statement before and it continues striking me as requiring the teacher to go pretty far back if the course requires the training of the operator to know when he is or is not confronted by a subject worry of putting on film.

I listened to Mr. Saxon thump that gentleman from Sweden tonight, obviously distressing to the racial maniacs and now I must

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Tuesday, June 21st, 1960.

Memorandum:

Summer. I didn't hear at what precise moment she arrived but I did hear that the sun rose at 5:08 and set a 7:27. Lucky sun, -- such modest hours.

But the nice thing about the advent of summer was the news it brought of little Miss Lee and the report she had, momentarily at least, had an opportunity to catch her breath. I hope the breaths were deep and prolonged.

As for local doings, things were fairly quiet and because of the heat, that was pleasant.

Before dawning, I spent some time in the garden gathering okra, beets, lettuce and such like both for the big house and across the fence. The belle peppers are doing so nicely, I am impatient between the time I gather them and when they turn up as seasoning in whatever..

At supper tonight there were several R. E. A. people and in the midst of things, J. H. asked me when it would be tomato time. I handed the guess it would be toward the end of the week. Several people volunteered the fact that they had heard about the vegetable garden and wondered if it might be seen. And supper finished, it was seen and surprise was expressed that there were really were tomatoes about ready to be plucked from their baby trellises.

The reaction I liked best came from a sedate, self-made executive who most certainly had never heard of the 18th century, formal gardening or anything of the sort. He turned back after having crossed it twice and spreading his arms, declared that I sure like the way you have brought all this together toward the center, making it look as though it must be in good order, which was his way of saying it gave him a measure of peace of mind, I suppose. And if a garden achieves that, whether in flowers or vegetables or both, it hasn't been undertaken in vain.



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I never ask question but I gather from table talk that there's another R. E. A. election in the offing and that the opposition is trying to elect Board members so by four votes against three, they can dominate the proceedings. J. H.'s office continues for another year but whether he will continue as chairman of the Board if the opposition wins Saturday's election, I know not. Curiously enough, the opposition seems to be led by Ruth Pierson's son who is President of the City Bank. The opposition is spending more money to elect Board members representing them than would compensate for the use of any R. E. A. money that might be handled by the bank, where the R. E. A. funds deposited in the City Bank. It is said that power is the reason for the effort to get hold of the co-operative, but it is so difficult for one to imagine one crazy about power without any thought of compensation that I am reminded of business men I have known in Manhattan who would gladly pay Certified Public Accounts more than could be whittled off their taxes if only the C. P. A.'s could rig things so that no check or a very small one would go to the Treasury. None of this seems to make any sense but perhaps one has to be engrossed in business to comprehend the satisfaction coming to those who practice such efforts at leger-de-main.

I was out of the house most of the day but in spite of that, I did chance to get caught three different times by people who kindly offered to serve as chauffeur on my behalf if I would be attend the Country Club dinner & tonight by the committee raising funds for the preservation of the old Seminary building. I understand the initial funds requested have already been rounded up and so I assume restoration will be undertaken almost any old time and I am delighted that the old landmark will thus be preserved.

And so the summer of 1960 gets under way and may it be bubbling over with a lot of nice things for Ly e....

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Wednesday, June 22nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and dry.

And today the sun began getting up a little later by about a minute but, oddly enough staying aloft a minute or two longer, 5:08 for rising and about 7:27 or 7:28 for setting and I still wonder why when it starts clipping the daylight hours off a little, the snipping isn't done equally at night and morning.

I had a chance to check on one or two letters of secondary importance today and discovered a letter I had thought from one person actually came from another.

I had written Mary Ellen Cunningham, wife of Peyton, jr., congratulating her on her article in Charles' Times a couple of weeks back. When a letter came from the Times, I assumed it to be her acknowledgement of my note. It sounded a little different from what I had expected but I was using a poor secretary and so charged the strangeness off to that fact and held the letter over for a second reading, after the first reader had said it was signed C. C. As I had heard Mary Ellen called by some nickname and couldn't remember it, I assumed that it was something beginning with a C. But on today's re-reading, I discovered my first secretary had skipped the next to the last paragraph and so ended up with C.C., although that was in a post script while the main body of the epistle had been signed Charles C., which strikes me as quaint since, coming from the Times and signed by Charles, the C. added to the Charles was certainly extraneous. Well, Charles allowed as how he had brought Fred Grace, who had introduced him to his fiancée, and come from Baton Rouge, -- had brought Fred down Cane River as far as Bermuda recently to observe architectural features as Fred is interested in such matters. Charles added he was thinking of building, too, and asked if he might bring Fred down here to see Yucca. Why Charles C. didn't give me a buzz, I know not. What he really



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wants, probably, is to have his prospective bride see Melrose and is taking this roundabout way to effect the matter. I shall respond with all the cordiality he has failed to show me since I began doing a column for The Enterprise.

Gourds, a foot in length, are beginning to grace the vine along the front gallery and half concealing some of the gourds hanging on the rafters from last year. I was arranging some runners on the vine today when a couple of wasps, annoyed at my presence near their domain in a neighboring gourd of last year, caught me three or four good licks on my left hand. Being up on a step ladder, I had no intention of starting an argument with them and so descended forthwith and applied some stuff to the bites so that my hand is only slightly swollen tonight. After attending to my hand, however, I attended to the wasps and am quite positive they will not be attacking another innocent by-standers. Sometimes the gourds I bore holes in for the wrens get the wrong tenants and this was a case in point and I made a round of the entire gallery after that and dispose of two other gourds, haging heavy with wasp occupants.

I had just finished that little chore when Father Calahan put in an appearance. I hadn't seen him in several weeks and we had lots to talk about from bees to bees and back again, covering the entire field from the Yucca gallery to the Presidential variety.

Celeste is always so prissy and so prone to omit anything about the church in her stories, I was amazed when she related this one two me yesterday, and I can't recall if I mentioned it yesterday or not:

In some South Louisiana town Marie and Clothilde and a teen age girl were waiting in line at the confessional. The young girl went in first. She confessed to the new priest, lately come from Europe, that she had been disporting herself too much in doing cartwheels. The priest, never having heard of that sport, said he couldn't understand. The girl repeated and then, by way of demonstrating, threw herself from feet to hands, back and forth, in and out of the confessional. Marie and Clothilde, knowing nothing of what the girl had said, were amazed at the performance and Marie said: -- Mais, Clothilde, this is terrible....a new priest and and a new penance and me, I forgot to put on my drawers this morning...

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Thursday, June 23rd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot-hot.

It seems to me I haven't seen J. H. since Sunday or Monday, so busy he seems to be and mostly, I believe, concerning the coming Saturday's R. E. A. stock holders election of Board members. I believe Mrs. Walker presented an account of what's cooking in today's Enterprise but I got no chance to read that.

Valley Electric has some sort of a Public Relations director who probably takes his orders from J. H. Be that as it may, I'm under the impression the job isn't being handled well. A case in point was the giving of advertising matter of R. E. A. exclusively to The Times recently. This may have been a slap at the Enterprise for the way Valley Electric elections were carried through in previous years but obviously Public Relations should be handled so that neither local paper should be alienated and naturally, if one paper is given all the advertising and the other none, the latter might well be expected to sound no peans of praise for the Board thus discriminating against it.

As I have probably opined before, the curse of the plantation system is to be found primarily in the fact that the master must of necessity do the thinking for everyone and so ends up expecting to do the thinking for people beyond the confines of the plantation and thus gets off the tract. It was Miss Gammie's greatest weakness,-- the assumption that because she could forget things that annoyed her, she labored under the illusion that other people would forget those same things, too. And they didn't.

I understand nothing about the squabble that has been going on in Valley Electric for the past few years. J. H. claims his interest is simply based on a desire to operate the thing effeciently and to the best advantage of the public generally. This might be



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true although, at the same time, it would be remarkable that he should devote so much time and energy to anything not providing a substantial compensation. There seem to be several other people just as concerned about control of the thing as J. H., and notoriously not idealistic about anything, who are fighting with equal vehemence, some with him, some against him. I cannot help feel that there must be some financial prize involved in the struggle or so many people wouldn't bother about all the scuffling.

Over the coffee cups this morning, Celeste grudgingly admitted she was going to the Saturday election but didn't mind saying she wished J. H. were not concerned with the things. She mentioned that some of Madam Regard's relatives drove up from Mausura to call on Madam R. at the hospital in the afternoon. Celeste, herself, did not see them, as she was at cards at the Country Club, but they were there on the phone and so was able to chat with her a bit.

Several people were so kind today to telephone me to say they enjoyed the Memo on the martins. One or two allowed as how they could stand more on the martins. Of course, there's much that could be penned but instead, I think I shall perhaps do one or two bird houses, directed primarily at the Hysterical Ladies, --and perhaps not.

I dropped Warren a note this morning, saying that some transparencies by I. S. Willard were being sent to him directly so that he might get some notion about Ghana in relation to its surroundings. I told him I had not seen the transparencies but should like to and at the same time, I should like to see what the Rocket could do in the same line of endeavor but that I

had lost track of her and assumed she had eloped with an Inca in the Andes or, possibly had got stuck on an oil rig in the Gulf. I pointed out

I hoped an article on the Ghana house rather than the Ghana garden might eventuate. He already has ample interior and exterior illustrations by Ramsey for such an article but is stalling and I hope the Willard transparencies may give him a push to make use of one or the other pictures on this subject. My note to the Rocket of two weeks ago today remains unacknowledged. I remarked in that note that the garden would be most photogenic within 10 to 12 days and, assuming it has ever caught up with her, I think she might have dropped me a card saying she could or could not make it. Perhaps she is back in South America or Shreveport or any place. One thing is certainly I have not qualms about sending other illustrations under the circumstances.....

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Friday, June 24th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and steaming until 4 this afternoon when the heavens rattled exceedingly and gave forth one measly tenth of an inch of sprinkle. Coming in the afternoon and what with no sunshine following it, the suggestion of moisture will linger until the morrow and give vegetation refreshment if not growth and it is pleasant in the low 70's. The sky, still overcast, will perhaps give us another sprinkle, I hope.

Mrs. Walker called this morning to say that she would much like to bring a young lady to Melrose this afternoon. The latter is Anne Clark, an English girl who is currently in the Cane River country studying farm mechanization, of all things. I allowed as how either between 2 and 4 or 6 and 8 would be just fine but that neither time should impinge on 5 to 6, it being the supper hour and too many of the wrong sort of people about.

Mrs. Walker and Miss Clark arrived promptly at 5. I still don't understand people.

I found Miss Clark an attractive college girl and nothing about her except her good sense to suggest she might be a farmerette or interested in manipulating farm machinery about which she seemed to know much. I must confess, however, that I am easily impressed on that score, knowing nothing about such matters. The ladies departed at 6:30.

The artist called me about 11 this morning to say that "when Jackie got up" she saw the peacocks crossing the public road, --Bermuda, and heading for the cotton field behind the artist's house. Not having the least idea where the hands of the clock might stand "when Jackie got up", I inquired about that point and learned "it was somethin' like 7 or 8 o'clock".

The peacocks had breakfasted at 5:45 and nothing appeared to be biting them. Why they suddenly should



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decide to take first to the public road  
and thence to the cotton patch, I haven't the least  
idea. About 2 this afternoon, some  
of the boys reported seeing them in the cotton field hard by  
Ghana, about as far to the East at that point as they  
had been toward the west in the morning. Assuming that  
they knew what they wanted and knowing them to be  
quite capable of jumping back over the fence if they  
cared to returned to Yucca, I left it to them  
to follow their own impulses. What with Mesdames Walker and  
Clark here at 6 when the peacocks usually sup,  
I did not see them. This is quite a new  
wrinkle in their deportment, after all these months  
of contented domesticity around Yucca but  
far be it from me to try to influence them to  
come home if they prefer exploring the great  
wide world on their own hook.

There's another curiosity I must report  
in the field of the quadrupeds. Sometimes the cow-  
boys keep their horses in the wood lot adjoining the gourd  
garden and there is a watering trough in the wood lot which sometin  
provides the gourds with ample water when the trough  
runs over and beneath the fence. I assumed some cowboy would  
turn on the faucet and then forget to turn it off but I was  
wrong, as I discovered this morning when working in  
the gourd garden near the watering trough which chanced to be  
empty. One of the saddle horses sauntered up,  
and having sniffed and found no water, blandly took the faucet handle  
in his mouth and turned on the water. It would have  
been too much to expect him to turn it off when  
he had drunk his fill, -- and he didn't.  
I must speak with the cowboys and congratulate them  
on the training of their mounts and, at the same time,  
suggest they carry the training just one step further,  
don't you think so.

It is said we shall have Sister with us this  
week end. She is said to be heading North from  
Baton Rouge where she has been visiting her  
brother who reports her face continues twitching  
noticeably and that she seems in a highly  
erratic state of mind. It sounds  
like a dull enough week end but I hold the thought  
it may not be the same in Lyme.....

10594

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Sunday, June 26th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Steamy.

Saturday's post did not go forward because  
the clerk took it upon himself to close the store  
and take whatever mail was to hand and post it in  
Hatchitoches, all without saying a word in advance, so  
thence to where ever they were, having the Valley Electric  
election where he remained until afternoon. I  
fiddled around on the gallery of the store for half an hour,  
not knowing of his departure, after which I returned here  
with the out-going mail which had come to hand from  
my typewriter but never will get going until tomorrow's  
routine gets into motion. Suffice to say that  
J. H.'s faction seems to have won the election.

But the weather's the thing and we really have  
had quite a lot as between Saturday and now, including  
three inches of rain which is just grand.

The Weather Bureau issued tornado warnings on a line  
100 miles east of a bee line from Shreveport to Beaumont  
which takes in this area. About 2:30 it rained  
mightily and suddenly in the midst of it, one quick  
puff of air, lasting not a second, and that was  
all of the wind but the rain continued until nearly 5.

I could see the puff had blown down some butterfly lilies  
and bananas in front of the house. I journeyed farther  
afield and discovered about a third of the huge old  
pecane tree behind the loom house, the one grafted  
fifty years ago by J. H. Henry while his wife, Cammie,  
held a lamp and I shall never know why they should have  
been grafting a tree after dark unless they were anticipating  
my inclination to weed at night.

In the wood lot, adjoining the bulb garden, three large limbs  
were also torn off. I guess they weren't any more than  
10 inches in diameter but the big old limb from the  
first tree was as big around as a human torso and the  
amount of smaller limbs carried with it astonishing.



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Some of the trellises were blown about a little but I got most of them back into shape alright. A dozen or so sunflowers in front of Ghana were flattened out, snapped off where tied to the fence, or snapped off at the bottom where they weren't tied. Nearly all of the others were flat on the ground but I straghtened them up and what with the ground being soft from all the rain, they will go on growing as usual. In the mean time, I gathered myself a fine bouquet of the sunflower blossoms on the stalks that were broken and tonight I have a fine bouquet that Vincent van Gogh would envy. They are gracing the fireplace in the living room and look altogether charming. As the stalks were about 15 feet in height when flattened, I could make the stems as long as I pleased and so I cut them about 3 or four feet in length and they really do look pretty in their new setting.

Sister blew in about 3:30 on Saturday afternoon on her way northward, having come from Baton Rouge. She seemed much as usual, more erratic at sometimes than others, and her face, I am told, is twitching madly. She planned to remain for several days but some girl called her from Shreveport and she decided she would go on home and then "come back about Wednesday for a visit". God forbid.

A friendly letter from Warren, retuning the I. S. Willard transparencies, puzzles me in part. He remarks as they haven't the means to develope the type of transparency la Willard submitted, they are unable to give much of an opinion about them. The fact that I. S. W. could seem them perfectly and the fact that the Picayune has lots of means to deal in transparencies, leaves me wondering and I am sending the letter to I. S. W. Warren also inquired as to where Carolyn might be, asked me to get in touch with her and added he wants to do the story I suggested on Plantation outbuildings if he only had the pictures and story. He has had both during the past six months and I'm quite at sea as to what he is driving at. He fell in love with Vienna and wants to tell me all when I have time to listen.

Mrs. Charles Dandridge of Baton Rouge who had asked me for Erwin material, wrote to thank me and to opine she could do something on me. Not wanting to bother with her on a visit, I sent her some material by mail, for the Advocate, giving a duplicate to Ora who wants to do something for the Shreveport Times and so the week end finishes and begins, and withal, busy.....

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Monday, June 27th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A lovely summer's day.

Today's mail was bountiful and I read none of it except a card from Lyme which delighted me by bringing news of little Miss Lee whose days are bound to be piled high with demands at this season, as I can well imagine. A card now and then gives me assurance that all cylinders are hitting and I urge that other correspondence be not attempted until a lull surprisingly develops.

I think I mentioned in Friday's memo that the peacocks had betaken themselves to the cotton fields beyond the Bermuda road. They returned Saturday morning, looking soaked and be-draggled and were content to remain at home all Saturday and all day Sunday. After a fine breakfast this morning, they took off again and about 8, the artist called to report them as being sighted at the honkey-tonk and asked me if I wanted to go after them. I did not. If they want to ramble, that's alright, so far as I am concerned. I have lots of things to do and chasing peacocks these days is not one of them. Eventually they will be grabbed by somebody thinking them akin to turkey and as suitable for the roasting oven but the disappointment will be great when the de-pluming begins. Emmet continues earnestly parking on the two peacock eggs and I can only imagine the surprise on both ducks' faces if young peacocks should come into being. In the mean time, if the big peacocks want to road-run -- far be it from me to assume the role of peacock minder.

There seems to be news about



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Howard Wolf-Nieman-Marcus and the proposed creation of plantation primitives once more. I ran through the thing very sketchily and shall try it again on the morrow. As near as I could comprehend from the kangarooing of the letter today, it appears August 1st is suggested as a likely date for the initial start on the 1961 line of designs. I shall send a response about Wednesday, after having gone over the letter more carefully tomorrow.

I did not see the lady at coffee this morning. She had taken off for Alexandria in search of a nursing home for mother. At supper, J. H. remarked she seemed pretty pleased with what she had to see. What and when the next move will be made, I know not. It is felt that if the lady is moved to Alexandria to a nursing home, hospital expenses will be cut in half and Madam Regard's other two daughters will find it more convenient to be with their mama. I can but ponder as to the advantage of Science in its discovery of ways to extend the life expectancy of the aged when the costs and trouble seem to be in excess of anything the patient or those responsible for the patient care to bear.

Interruption.....

A be-lated secretary passing this way enabled me to run through the Hirsch letter which I accordingly enclose so you may keep abreast with things. I find it amusing that Warren on Saturday and Martin today speaks of the Rocket and I find it interesting to learn she plans returning to Peru in mid August. How seldom do we hear direct and such information so undependable, and how inevitably we get her schedule regardless from perhaps older and better friends.

And so the week begins turning and somewhere along the way may little Miss Lee be able to catch a breather now and then.....

P. S. I attach a leaf from a plant I think may be Sweet Basil but I'm not sure. It is quite fragrant when plucked but I know not if it will retain its mint-like perfume.....

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Tuesday, June 28th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A lovely hot summer's day.

Delight bubbled over the coffee cups this morning, the lady being enormously pleased with the nursing homes she had inspected yesterday in the Alexandria area and with the one she selected as the place for her mama's recuperation. He said the lady doctor had offered to make the trip down with Madam Regard by ambulance but it was thought her hospital nurse would be just as suited for the trip and Celeste would drive ahead of the ambulance, spend the day with her mama, remain over night and then return here Thursday and I agreed to play my accustomed role of master of the house during the interim. I was frankly surprised at supper when J. H. remarked that Celeste was mighty unhappy about the move to the nursing home, was implying that J. H. was trying to force Madam Regard out of the Natchitoches hospital, etc., etc., etc. I am at a loss to make up my mind about the mental stability of so many people I encounter and I have no doubt that they, in turn, after a contact with me, feel the same way.

The enclosure from Robina from which I have detached an address, speaks for itself. I'm so glad that Aunt Willie presented Caroline Briarwood Dormon with a new horseless carriage. As for the observation about Carrie letting the colored girl drive the mile or two to Saline to do shopping or pick up the mail, I can only recall that Miss Dormon at one time enjoyed a measure of fame for the nonchalance with which she operated a car, in fact, I believe Carrie was chauffeur on the famous New Orleans jaunt which, among other things, put that particular car and its passengers, including Miss Cammie, Sister, etc., into the ditch, so perhaps the new car will get something of a relaxation when the colored girl instead of Miss Dormon lays hold upon the wheel.

The peacocks did not appear for breakfast this morning on the Yucca gallery but later in the morning I discovered them at Arenbourg where they seemed quite contented although a bit ruffled as to plumage or is it plumeage. Well, anyhow, I hadn't the slightest intention of trying to persuade them to give up their new habitat and I take it they are still resting there tonight.



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On Saturday night, when I tuned in for a 7 o'clock news program, I was impressed to hear invitation to learn signing off as from 6:30 to 7, having discussed Shaw's Arms and the Man. Last night, by sheer chance I stumbled on to the same Station--WWL, presenting Shaw's St. Joan, one third being given each successive night. And tonight I shall make it a point to listen to the second part. I recall the Theatre Guild's presentation of the play and how well it was done, but oddly enough, I recall even more vividly the pleasure I used to have in reading the Preface to this play which, as I recall, was about three times the length of the play itself, so far as pages in the book went. I liked last night's actors, --and Irish-English collection, I believe, and I recognized the names of not one of them. As I recall, A. Scourby, esquire, did the Bishop of Beauvais or some such a year or two ago on the New York stage in the same vehicle but I never did know if that presentation was a success.

I received a home baked pound cake and some home made dill pickles from Mrs. Spinks of Crockett, Texas which I found delicious. She seems like such an interesting person in domestic and horticultural matters. She is one of those people whom I scarcely know in person but enjoy corresponding with very much. I believe it was a year or two ago little Cammie brought her, her husband, her son and somebody on a Saturday night about first dark after, by telephone, I had denied them entrance. Our chat was brief, my hands muddy and the greetings began and ended within five minutes on the front gallery. I saw her and her family a second time last pilgrimage but only casually, since one sees nobody really when five hundred other people are buzzing around. I wish little Miss Lee and I were guests of the Spinkses, what with the night so peaceful, and the promise of pound cake and a goblet of buttermilk all around and walnuts dropping from the branches above.

I saw Blythe at the gate for a few minutes this afternoon. She didn't get out of her car. She had come up alone and had had the artist helping her fix up the camp in anticipation of a big 4th of July week end. She invited me over for supper on Saturday night and I may and I may not go.....

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P. S. --this morning, on reaching the store, I discovered I had not addressed the envelope to little Miss Lee and so requested the clerk to do so by hand while the postman waited

Wednesday, June 29th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid.

It must be summer. This evening the air planes began dusting the cotton and there will be a follow-up with four or five more planes doing the same thing at dawn, it is said.

Well, Dot and Dash put in an appearance this afternoon about 3 o'clock. I was going to the store about 3 o'clock when I met them at the cattle gap in front of J. H.'s house, they apparently having come down the Bermuda road instead of hopping over the fence into the white garden. I must say the public road is a fine place for peacocks.

I transacted my business at the store within about five minutes but I did not see any peacocks as I came back through the gardens but discovered them waiting for me on the wucca gallery. I have never seen two hungrier birds and it is the more surprising since they seldom eat more than a few mouthfuls. But they attacked a large hand-out of cracked corn as though they had never seen food before, followed by a corn bread biscuit and a white biscuit and no end of crackers. Occasionally I see an eye glinting through the screendoor from where I sit as I tap on

this machine and I'm sure it is the eyes of Dot and Dash, asking for more. Perhaps one reason why one sees comparatively few peacocks around the country is because they are forever wandering off. I suppose Dot and Dash will be repeating their act shortly, too, but at least they have discovered where the food bag remains and now that the airplanes are dealing death on insects, I shouldn't be surprised if living off the land in their travelers might become more difficult although that factor, --or any other, --will scarcely teach them anything for I think their gray matter is as limited as the size of their body, so amazingly small for any living thing possessed of so much plumage.



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The up-shot of all the commotion yesterday about finding a pleasant mrsing home for Madam Regard ended up by taking her to the Alexandria home this morning. I suppose I shall see Celeste on Friday and may get a report then. I suppose there will be much family around by then, too, what with the 4th just in the offing and I, for one, will be delighted when July 5th dawns again and a semblance of routine has been re-established.

Ora called me this noon to say she had written a piece about Ghana garden with a view to sending it to the Shreveport Times and read same to me. I thought it sounded quite good. Whether the Shreveport Times will or not is another matter.

Tonight's radio news suggests Kennedy seems to have the Democratic nomination in his pocket. I have only one objection to Kennedy and that is, if he becomes the Democratic standard bearer, I doubt if he can win the Presidency. In the case of the Republican standard bearers, on the other hand, my only objection to Mr. Nixon is that I'm afraid he can beat Mr. Kennedy. I ought to be able to get a lot of reading machine time in between the Conventions and the election for one thing is certain, I'm not going to spend my summer listening to politicians blow off steam.

Juanita B. called me this morning to ask a favor. She wants Carrie to paint her a magnolia at a price not less than one hundred dollars or more either. I am asked to persuade the lady to do the job. If I don't succeed by mail, Juanita B. asks if I will drive up to Briarwood with her some day for a personal assault. I shall be glad to.

So much more to chatter about but this must do for the moment.....

10602

Thursday, June 30th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A pure summer's day and hot.

Dot and Dash continue eating as though they hadn't had a mouthful in a week.

About 6 o'clock this morning, Olyte arrived bearing a box which J. H. had ordered delivered to me. I contained 8 white guineas, perhaps half grown, --about the size of quail. My thought was to keep them incarcerated for about a week and accordingly put them in a coop but the clerk, passing this way, and always eager to attend to everything, both on his side of the road and mine, put in an appearance with suggestions, and I blandly walked away, leaving the thing to be attended to properly.

I must confess I laughed in my beard this afternoon when I discovered that all the guineas had escaped from the coop and where they may be tonight, I know not. It will give me so much satisfaction to refer to the effectency displayed when, in a day or two, inquiry is made as to how the guineas are doing.

Blythe, according to my agents, passed this way, en route to her camp, this morning with three or four ladies. I had a feeling she would probably pass this way this afternoon but she didn't. At supper J. H. remarked that Blythe certainly was enjoying the camp. He said he had spent considerable time with her during the afternoon. For J. H. to have called at a camp on the river is extraordinary. I have no doubt he was glad of the opportunity to talk with her about the Shreveport doings of which I have heard nothing since Sunday.

I heard the third and final part of St. Joan last night and was delighted to have my memory refreshed as to its excellence.

All week I have been a little at sea about radio



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programs which seem to have been undergoing their seasonal re-shuffle. "The world tonight" which I had been hearing at 7 now moves up 15 minutes and, much to my pleasure, Eric Saverei from London come on the air for five minutes at 7 o'clock. I had heard no announcements concerning any changes in programs and there must have been lots of people who didn't notice anything about the changes, if, indeed, the newspapers mentioned it. On Monday night, the first third of St. Joan was presented over WWL, New Orleans, at 9 o'clock and it was announced that the second third would be presented on the following night, and the third third on the next night. And so these two broadcasts did appear but, without announcement, the two last thirds were presented at 8 o'clock instead of the 9 o'clock of the first which might easily have lead me to miss the last two but, fortunately didn't. The rains of last week end did wonderful things for the grass in the vegetable section but it pulls up easily enough and the vegetables and flowers are even out-growing the grass. In the ice box awaiting me when I have attended to some mail is a salade I stirred up for myself along about first dark, --and all the stuff except the condiments, from the Ghana garden, --tomatoes, festooned with raw carrots and radishes, slices of belle pepar, all on tender leaf lettuce and a sprinkling of parsley. And that with a bumper of Tender Leaf tea, and I shall be able to take the 10 o'clock news either standing or flattened.

The enclosures speak for themselves. The one signed Dehl is from Dehl Wright, a friend of Mrs. Spinks don't recall if I mentioned yesterday that Andy brought me a new little black Grandpa. The new one is a much younger brother of the big black Grandpa, now about a year old and these brother cats seem to realize their common parentage and hit it off just fine.

And now to some labor and thence to repose.....

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Friday, July 1st, 1960.

Memorandum: Around 100 this afternoon, around 80 tonight and I mind it not at all. I suppose the humidity was fairly high but the dampness of my shoulder was even greater at coffee time this morning. The lady allowed herself the extravagance of tears half a dozen times during the endless half hour. Nobody knows, I am told, how dreadful it is to have to make decisions and nobody can appreciate what she has had to go through to decide that mother should be transferred to a nursing home. The home itself is very nice, -- more tears, --but the approach to the home is through a section that isn't at all pretty and more tears.

interruption.....

"Aside from the pleasure of hearing your voice," --a phrase that strikes me has having been used before by the Rocket who was calling from New Orleans. She has not one but two nephews with her and she feels they ought to have the full benefit of instruction in sailing which she is providing for them somewhere a round New Orleans. Why these two youths living in Texas, hundreds of miles from the coast, should reap any great advantage in being instructed how to sail, I wouldn't know, and, naturally didn't ask.

But the "aside from the pleasure of hearing your voice" had to do with plans for doing a Hunter film. It seems that the Rocket while either in Marshall or New Orleans, -- or, for that matter, where mightn't she have been, indulged in a three way telephone conversation with Martin as one of the participants and Howard Wolf in New York the third. The talk revolved about the desing angle and it was said that Dupont might want to buy the film, if made since it is quite possible the Dupont will want the fabric



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designs of the Wolf creations, while Wolf or Nieman-Marcus or somebody might want all the other designs for dress materials. A flock of magazine, know-towing to big advertisers like Dupon will allot large story space and much illustrations on the general subject of Plantation Primitives and Cane River and Hunter in particular. And therefore, what did I think about giving up the Peru trip in August or should it be carried through. I allowed as how I thought it didn't matter, just so long as one thing was undertaken and carried through to its ultimate conclusion. That was agreed to, which, you and I realize, doesn't mean anything, and so it was further agreed that the Rocket and I would have a conference prior to the Wolf descent on the fold, assuming that by that time the nephews will have completed their course of instruction in sailing. Imagine.

Inquiry was made about the garden and a vague apology for not having made it in time for the early summer shots. I brushed that aside by saying that that work had been achieved and that perhaps there would be something to be done when the Hunter film was being turned and the autumnal aspect of the gardens had taken on another phase for delighting the eye.

I guess that was all there was to it, except that the Louisiana Today magazine, advertised for autumn, will not appear until Christmas, with Miss Ramsey as Editor. That Christmas date is pretty funny, too, although which Christmas wasn't mentioned, and to that I shall merely add that I had to order some primitive note paper recently and apologized for disturbing anybody in the Advertising Mart, --in my order, and today I got the merchandise by parcel post and, promptly as bills always arrive, a bill for same, although I haven't heard a peep about Forestry article or the adver sting copy for ElCamino Real, etc., etc. J. H. spent the day in Shreveport, the Winks having decided to get a legal separation which both J. H. and I both feel would settle nothing and only lead to more confusion but he is letting Shreveport battle out that one. And Monday will be the 4th and on Tuesday a couple of conversations will go forward again after a day's interim.....

Sunday, July 3rd, 1960.

Memorandum: Typical July 4th weather, dazzling sunshine and hot-hot.

My thoughts have been turning so frequently during the past 48 hours in the direction of Lyme, wondering if there was a big hejira in the works and if a measure of fresh air would be available.

Thus far, it has been comparatively quiet in these part although along about Tuesday there will be another pow-wow at this bend of the river, --the merchant-planter, the Shreveport and Baton Rouge members of the family joining together to confer on what I do not know. According to Carmen, the Shreveport papers have carried a notice that the physician is asking for divorce from his wife and custody of the children. What comes after that is any body's guess. The bag should be put in an institution but the need for that has existed for the past quarter of a century at least and whether the realization of the need is any closer or not, I wouldn't know.

Blythe, Jean Frantz and Miriam Johnson came up to the camp on Saturday and invited me to sup with them at the camp which I accepted. It was all very pleasant, the food wonderful and the walk home across the cotton field under a waxing moon was delightful from every angle.

The Louisiana Legislature is in prolonged week end recess and Ed Rand came up on Saturday afternoon to rest at the camp but, as he returned home before dark, I did not see him. Blythe and Ed are so disgusted with the performances of the Legislature that he finds himself wondering why he ever ran for Representative. He declares that once is too much and that he will never get tangled up in such chicanery again.

Miriam Johnson is secretary to some medical group in Alexandria



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and brought word of Madam Regard from her new doctor in the Alexandria neighborhood, Dr. Sproul, who reports Madam Regard as being just fine and relishing her new surroundings and

withal as happy as a clam. To my surprise, Celeste hasn't been down to see her mother this week end but expects to spend Tuesday with her. Perhaps it is just as well that Madam Regard is seeing more of other people and less of her local daughter who is highly emotional at the moment and on every occasion possible, weeps on my shoulder, pointing out that I have no idea how it is to be without one's mother in the house, etc., etc. I think of the 9 or 10 year old child who becomes the center of attention by the means of tears and then tends to work the afordsaid tears on every occasion possible.

This noon at dinner, I gave her the message about her mama from Miss Johnson and she decided then and there she must go over to the camp to get a person to person account and so she went but couldn't remain long as she had a couple of parties on for the afternoon and so was in a slow hurry.

The ladies came over from the camp about 5 o'clock this afternoon to chat and to visit the kana garden and to invited me for supper at the camp. I told them I would appear by 8 o'clock or not at all. I got bogged down across the fence a little after 7, however, and there was another torrent of te and so it was after 8 o'clock before I got out from under the cascade a so did not get to the camp for supper but took a breather on the moon drenched gallery instead, and withal liking the big old bees buzzing from morn' til night, I could hear speed boats tearing up and down the river but, praise the Lord, I saw nobody except Blythe and associates. I hold the thought that I may be as luck on the morrow for I have no end of stuff I simply must do on this machine and pilgrims and typewriters are no earthly good at mixing al- though, together, they are expert in mixing me up.

The artist called to say that all the men folks is plannin' a barbecue and they say they ain't gwine to let none of the lady folks go to their barbecue which is to be held on Little River. The artist thought it quite a good move because, as she interprets it, there are always a lot of ladies who think the men folks can have food and drink without them. Thus we gird our loins for the glorious fourth and tomorrow on this keyboard I shall be reporting the

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Monday, July 4th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot.

If only I might have been able to share some of the peace and quiet that was mine all day with little Miss Lee whose holiday probably wasn't all peace and quiet.

It seems remarkable that I never saw a road runner all day long. I even got a little reading done which is even more remarkable although I must confess I had to sacrifice some "must stuff" on this keyboard to have a go at the disc section.

At coffee this morning, Pat and Juanita B. passed by next door and we all had a dab of conversation before they went on to tow, after an early morning trip to Cloutierville to put some furniture in the house down yonder which they had never asked for in the first place but which had been dumped on them out of a clear sky a few months back with the request that a notarized statement be given Sister to indicated they were in possession of a child's bed they didn't want.

Perhaps the quiet of this week end was a divine gift of rest in anticipation of a hurly-burly that is in the books for the morrow when Sister will arrive and for a conference with her two elder brothers which will take place on Wednesday evening when the Baton Rouge contingent will pull in.

Edith Porter of Shreveport, visiting Carmen this week end, 'phoned this morning. The hope had been expressed earlier that I would receive Edith today but I had hedged at the time and this morning I lied and said there was too much family about to think of visitors. Edith said she had read in the Shreveport papers that legal proceedings had begun, brought by Dr. "enk for divorce with the request that he be given custody of the children. From the conferences that have gone before, one assumes that Sister will not contest the matter. What the Wednesday conference is all about, I know not, but I assume it will have to do with



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where Sister will make her abode, once she has succeeded in divesting herself of husband and children. All I do know is the fact that perhaps her two brothers and possibly her legal adviser who is Whitfield Jack, I suppose, feel that Sister should not think of setting up housekeeping in Shreveport where she might annoy her husband, children, former in-laws, etc., etc. I hope to get the General's ear before her final disposition has been determined for I think the General has no notion as to the tenseness Sister's presence here adds to J. H.'s case. Celeste, like everybody else, knows that if Sister should come here to live, it would be but the shortest time before Sister and Celeste were into each other's hair which, in turn, would add even greater burdens to J. H.'s present cares. Whenever Sister is here, she naturally prefers to staying in the big house as opposed to staying across the fence. J. H., accordingly, in fear of a dozen things that might happen, never relaxes during the night and makes constant trips back and forth to see if things are quiet. Sister should, of course, be put into some sort of an asylum but that, too, would represent only a temporary stop-gap for she has never been able to entertain herself and her propensity of keeping the pot boiling is so firmly established, she will undoubtedly be hard at that line of endeavor where ever she may land. Well, within the next few days, we ought to know what new pattern will be offered for use, albeit temporary, at most.

Sister is supposed to arrive here on the morrow. Bright and early tomorrow, Celeste will head out to spend the day with her mama and on Wednesday, she has an all day frolic at some camp on the river so that she will miss much of the commotion and all the "enrys" will be dining at the big house and I, for one, will be awfully busy at weeding garden and such like.

The Walkers have invited me to be their guest at the Country Club on the 15th, when swimming will be in order, after which a seafood dinner will be in the cards. I haven't exactly declined as yet but...

I was glad to notice today that Dot and Josh decided to avoid road running in favor of the cool of the creek. I saw them in the creek and even the quinces seemed to like the notion of remaining in the shade like airplanes are currently engaged in their circling and stunting operations and that must put down the big supply for our feathered neighbors. I told the 11 men picnic went off swimmingly.

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Tuesday, July 6th, 1960.

#### Memorandum:

Hot.

I feel sorry for the people but even more for the vegetation in the Baton Rouge area where there has been a little or no rain in weeks. I find it a little more interesting than the usual crop devastations that result from prolonged drought because it is from New Orleans to a little north of Baton Rouge that sugar is produced and what with the threat of cutting off the Cuban imports in Washington while the sugar cane dries up in Louisiana strikes me as quite a twist of fate.

I used to think that south Louisiana had more rain than this section but it seems the annual rainfall is about the same in both sections. Up here it does most of its raining in the winter months, with comparatively dry times during the summer which enables people to raise cotton which cannot stand much rain. In south Louisiana, however, the vast amount of rain comes during the summer months and it is in summer that sugar cane has to have ample moisture, hence sugar down south and cotton up north.

Sister arrived this morning before dinner. I knew not how long she plans to remain. She admitted me that she had given my number for important Shreveport calls tonight and so I suppose she will be honoring me with prolonged sittings sometime between now, 10, and midnight.

Mr. Nugent of Peoria arrived unannounced this afternoon with his daughter. He says he has purchased property on Cane River and needed areas along the river to stock many heads and plans building a big house here on one of the properties and a camp on the other, starting this autumn. I liked the Nugents very much and it will be pleasant to have them in the Parish although I reckon I shall not get around to visit them any more than I do other people.

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0001, 4th July, 1960

As I turned the page, a secretary blew in and I was delighted to find the message from Lym as of Friday, last past. I held the thought the week end wasn't too early-burly. It appears that there than Lestan have problems in the under-plannings, as it were. I believe my difficulties are gradually vanishing although the gradualness is leisurely enough. I assume I must have bruised the bone of my heel and that it is determined to take care of itself. There has been no swelling and discussion of the matter with physicians on a social basis comes to the conclusion that time will take care of the matter. It takes me a minute or two to get going when I ease out of bed but within six minutes I am moving around alright and although I incline to limp a little, it really gives me no but scant annoyance.

I find Joan O'Brien's letters so dull I incline to let them slide but I'm glad I read the one coming to hand today since it gave me a dab of information I shouldn't have learned otherwise, it would seem, --news that Kay's mother had died. There was a letter from James in the post, too, and it does seem a little odd he didn't mention the matter. Perhaps he didn't know about it, which seems unlikely. Perhaps he thought it better to let Kay tell me about it. Be that as it may, I sent some roses to her as a message of affection.

I have never yet discovered if Irma O'Brien is still at Charleston or in Hollymead. Perhaps I haven't read communications from South Carolina carefully but I don't recall receiving very many of late.

The artist came to see me today. She had a little book with her which contained receipts for chances to be taken on a coffee pot that will be given the lucky holder of a ticket during the October 15th and 16th St. Augustin's Church fair, which seems like taking a chance a long time ahead.....

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Wednesday, July 6th, 1960.

Memoandum:

Hot and dry and dry and hot. I was surprised to learn that Celeste and Sister had already had a brush, following their brief contact. Together Celeste was reading one of her favorite essays which she never practices, --the need for cutting down on expenditures. Sister snapped back that some people preen their feathers on having washed a few pans of dishes, after which they expect to get a trip to Europe. Great will be the flying of furs if Sister, as she presently intends, comes here to make her home.

The S. G. Henrys were expected this afternoon and so Celeste issued orders that if they should get here anytime up to first dark, the General's wife was to be driven immediately to the Hertzog camp where Celeste and girl friends were spending the day on an all girl frolic. Before the coffee had been downed, Inez Chaplin, Madam Millsaugh and two or three other gals drove in to pick up Celeste and off they all went in gale of delight.

I went to the store this afternoon about 1:30 and noticed the General's car at the side gate. I didn't see it until 5:30 supper and then learned that Madam General had declined to go to the frolic and had remained at home instead. By now everybody is having a bit of a lull at conversation across the fence. I suppose after supper, however, the General expressed a desire to see the gourd garden and the Ghana garden and, to my surprise, J. H. and Sister came along. It was the first time J. H. had seen the place since the vegetables really got to going. The things, vegetables and flowers, looked so pretty. I was delighted that the twilight hour had been the one they chanced to select for their little tour.

ym et souhnd bnd kren fceeb eneb et wen bnd



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Carmen, who adores peddling bad news, called this afternoon to report that she thought Ette Levy is about to die. Ette is a fuss-budget who lives with her bachelor brother, Joe, a very nice person and I shall feel he will find compensation in the quiet that may follow his sister's departure after 73 years of fussing. I can't think why I remember it but I do always think not of them but of their grandparents about whom Ette was forever talking as having come to Hatcher's from Lunenburg. The Hertzogs came from the same area, I suppose but not the same city. I think and unlike the Levys who remained orthodox, the Hertzogs were metamorphosed into Catholics on their arrival. And Marcel's writings on such genealogies, worded as they can never learn to spell correctly. I of an empty head. Regarding the enclosure concerning Tom Erwin, the most interesting segment of his career, I did not mention in the material sent to La Baldrige, feeling the family might not relish it. The fact of the matter is that following the Civil War, Tom and his brother, Joseph, tried to keep Shadey Grove in production but they lacked sufficient capital although their cousin, Andrew Gay, had ample means and advanced just enough to get a mortgage on Shadey Grove and then withheld any more advances with the result that the Gays got Shadey Grove and Tom, disgusted with life, became a tramp or a hobo and wandered for several years up and down and across the country, riding freight trains and scuffling about on foot. What made his career really remarkable was that after the disappointments of life during the war and his utter economic defeat, he made a right about face, in the early 1880's, planted both feet solidly on home ground and began life all over again and on a shoe string ran up quite a fortune, since most people like to hear only the opulent side of their kin folk, it seemed better to omit that part having to do with his failure just prior to his ultimate success.

And now to some desk work and thence to my

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Thursday, July 7th, 1960.

Memorandum: Hot and dry with a northeast wind blowing all day to keep down the humidity. At 6:30 AM, breakfast, the General, his wife, the clerk, I and Sister. She was snoring about in the kitchen until we were ready to arise when she brought in a coffee pot, tried to start an argument with me and we all scattered in several ways and why she hadn't designed to grace the table while we were there, I know not, although I assumed there had probably been a rumus last night. Over the coffee cups at 9, I heard an unexpected tale from my hostess. She reported having returned a little after 7 last night from her all day frolic at the Hertzog camp. She had left word here that the general's wife was to be transported thither on her arrival here, expecting her to get up from Baten Rouge about 6. But somehow the Baten Rouge contingent had arrived around 1:30 and the General's wife and declined the picnic on ground of a headache. Eventually, sometime between 7 and 8, the General, J. H. Sister and Celeste, being across the fence, Celeste decided to go over to the big house to see how the lady with a headache was doing. Half way there, she encountered her and was taken aback to note her greeting disdained and hear the lady say she was marching straight to her car and heading out for Baten Rouge. She had decided that Celeste had wilfully absented herself from home for the day as a snub. How these ladies get so tangled up in their tauniness, I cannot say. She was prevailed upon to spend the night here, however and they departed this morning about 8 with an ample supply ofokra, belle peppers and tomatoes from the Ghana garden. A little after 10 this morning when I went for the mail, I saw J. H. who asked if I would confer with him in his office. He said he was at his wits' end to know what to do with Sister. He and the General want her to get away



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from Shreveport and find an apartment where she will be comfortable and be surrounded with different kinds of friends and beyond trouble making propensities in her husband's family. Sister wants an apartment in Shreveport. She isn't satisfied with what J. H. and Stephen recommend and is generally disgruntled. She can't be persuaded to undergo psychiatric treatment and is sufficiently sane much of the time to avoid commitment. It certainly is a problem here to talk about the wisdom of sending her out of the State, either to the mountains or the shore for a prolonged rest but they can think of no one who would accept companionship. I have a feeling she would be about the same where ever she journeyed and return in the same frame of mind. In the meantime, she remains here for how long, I know not. It's a subject that bodes me no end, but, nevertheless, one cannot help wondering how, in the long run, it will all pan out.

This morning at 4, Dot and Dash had their breakfast on the front gallery. I was in and out of the house several times and 10 minutes later, noticed Dash was alone and making noises of discontent. Suddenly she took to the air and landed on top of the house. Dot's figures could readily be discerned there, too, and everybody seemed well pleased with the world as viewed from that vantage point. An hour later they were on the gallery again, remaining there to frolic on the grass all day. What with a nice full moon tonight, I shall go out in a few minutes and see if their silhouettes can be made out in the moonlight. I hoped they would be comfortable in the big pecan tree but apparently Luna currently appeals to their whims and it must be admitted such a perch is at once lofty and ample.

Carmen called today to report she had received the several working sheets about Hatchiteches which Ola Mae had asked me to do in the notes you have already seen. Ola Mae had sent them to Carmen to see if the one or the other would fit in to the space. Ola Mae had indicated and Carmen said they or at least any one of them would and she had so indicated and returned same to Ola Mae. Why they should have been sent to Carmen, I cannot imagine and, of course, I have never had an acknowledgement from Ola Mae. And now for a dab of desk work, followed by some roof-top gazing and so to bed.

10616

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Friday, July 8th, 1960.

Memorandum

An afternoon respite for everybody came this afternoon when Sister decided to run up to Shreveport with J. H. who was going on business.

I think I did not get around to tell you about the balance of yesterday, so far as Sister was concerned, following breakfast. About 9, she was upstairs where she had gone, following the departure of the S.G.'s, and J. H. sent her a note to say howdy. She sent back word she had passed that way to say howdy. She sent back word she didn't feel like journeying to the store. J. H. accordingly took Mat to the big house and upstairs where they found Sister so drunk she didn't know what she was saying. Naturally she didn't come down for noon dinner and the same was true for supper, since she had gone into a drunken slumber.

At coffee this morning, I found Celeste quite provoked, --she doesn't know yet about Sister's drunk of yesterday. About 9 o'clock, while Celeste was entertaining Pere Antoine, Celeste put in an appearance, explaining she couldn't sleep without a tablet. That seems natural enough since she had been sound asleep during the past 10 hours. There was much loud talk and general unpleasantness and thus ended the day.

Thelma had called a meeting of the Board of the Hysterical Ladies for 4 yesterday and the main matter taken up was what houses would be on this year's Pilgrimage. Celeste said she doubted if Melrose could be but that she would have to advise the Board within a few days so that the publicity could be started. She said she had in mind taking the matter up with me. Well, obviously, it is impossible to plan anything with the situation existing as it does at the big house. I



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leaving out all mention of Melrose. If the problem should be removed prior to October, the house might be included, if not, the Melrose segment would be eliminated entirely. So much for the publicity department. As for the heavy of hostesses that we shall need, should the matter clear up, that is a different story and I, for one, would not expect any of these helping me, such as Juanita B., Ora, I. S. Willard, Mrs. Walker, Lucille Conahan and so on to decline invitations to receive elsewhere, should they be invited. It's wonderful what a head full of slightly soft graymatter can do when coupled with a bottle of hard liquor. I have come to the conclusion that J. H. and the General are both wrong in playing along with Sister and letting her keep everybody in such an uncertain state. As to what goes on in the family in Shreveport, I know not. Be that as it may, Sister will be back tonight and so far as I know, her plans for remaining here seem to be unlimited. Peer Kay is obviously having quite a rough time of it, as her letter so clearly indicates. I must say I am still a little puzzled that nobody from that direction has ever mentioned her mother. Celeste was going to run down to Magnolia this afternoon to try to persuade Mat to open up the place for the October tour. I hope she is successful for it would do everyone good in that menage to have a pilgrimage source to help blow away the cobwebs of Miss Sally's half century of dominating damnation that cast such a pall over the place. I have long contemplated how much could be done with the ante bellum over-seer's house, the brick slave quarters, the ante bellum gin and so on. Not one in a hundred pilgrims would know or care that the house is a 1904 item, and, as Miss Sally was wont to remark, "It's much bigger than Melrose....."

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Sunday, July 10th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid.

I held the thought the week end at Lyme may have been as peaceful as it was here.

Saturday's breakfast was a little tempestuous because the visiting lady obviously had jumped out of the wrong side of the bed but breakfast didn't last very long and the balance of the week end was sweet as peaches.

Fortunately, the mail was sent and accordingly I did not miss any of the secretaries who went somewhere for a baseball game over the week end.

I was happy to be able to complete "Candidates, 1960" last night and found the whole book as fine a collection of portraits of candidates as one is likely to run across. By the time this memo reaches your true hand, the Democrats will undoubtedly already have selected Mr. Kennedy as their standard bearer, and impending event, however, which will in no way cut down my interest in tracking down tonight's broadcast of Mr. Stevenson on Face the Nation.

I find it interesting that Celeste seems so contented these days, after her period of dissatisfaction covering the past several weeks. She saw her mama on Tuesday of last week and I suppose will visit her again sometime this coming week. In the meantime there is much social activity including a bunch of girls down today for cards.

Sister went to church in town, picking up Mrs. Wagner, an ancient friend of her mama's, and after church she dined at the hotel where she saw lots of people including the sisters Haupt, Carmen and so on. Returning here in the afternoon, she honored me with a visit, bringing the article about Chan



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the Shreveport Times. She lingered long and spoke of many personalities but never did refer to her present status. She did mention that Lloyd is at home and said that while she was in Baton Rouge, he had given up his Dallas job and gone to California where he thought it would be nice to give swimming lessons but had wired home for a hundred dollars to get him back to Shreveport where he is currently taking a vacation "since he has no intention of working from week to week. I am having the artist knock off a plantation primitive, with emphasis on various aspects of endeavor by the field hands. Some of these aren't of any interest but occasionally there's one that somebody like Schumaker would love. Recalling some of the problems that went into erections for that house and Waverly prints many years ago, --at that time having to do with garden scenes from Versailles, I am guiding the artist so that by the end of the present month has run out and the Nieman-Marcus thing approaches the boiling point, there will be some combinations that will take almost no alterations by the artist to put them in printable shape. She doesn't know it but this week the artist will do three that will provide the story of cotton culture in three designs, the first being cotton plantings on a striking curve, the second cotton hoeing, the third cotton picking, each carrying out the same type of switch that will fit in very neatly with fabric printing. The point in all this is to give the visiting artists a once-over of the several murals at Yucca, the African House and kana and arrange a place for them to collapse in the open air where they will find themselves confronted by a synthesis of the various things they have seen as murals in different arrangements, so neatly worked out as to require little more than the catching of coloring in the transmission of the original designs to the ultimate drawing board for the presses. The originals will probably go into the Nieman-Marcus exhibition while the ones that aren't grabbed up for that purpose may be used for a "atchitoches show at holiday time.....

Preparation  
for the Dallas  
group

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Monday, July 11th, 1960.

Memorandum:

The hottest day of 1960 thus far and I guess among the more humid.

I was delighted to find an air mail from Lymé in today's post, giving such a dandy account of recent doings, the clipping that interests me so much and the card I find entrancing.

How little Miss Lee finds time during such busy days to attend to all these matters astonishes me.

I was sorry to learn the postal boy had been dragging their feet on the July 4th mail, posted here on the 5th which should have reached Lymé by the 8th, I should think, but as politics war war, perhaps the postal section slows down.

Things rock along much as usual at this bend of the river. We were four at dinner today, --J. H., James Livingston, the clerk and I, what with Celeste not being at home, having gone to see her mama and do some shopping, which put J. H. with us and James Livingston because he is an old friend. As for Sister, she dined at Magnolia on the invitation of Mat Hertzog and the breaking of bread at noonday down Magnolia way was said to have been a success from Sister's point of view. I know not if there were other guests but I know Mat's wife, Dee, was not at home today, having gone to Monroe to do something or other for her sister.

The Magnolia dinner guest was back at Melrose early and, being bored, came to me to get more so. She plans leaving for two or three days in Shreveport, taking off in the morning, she reports. She is going to see about getting her daughter packed off to Monterey, Mexico, along with a flock of other youngsters. She plans to return here on Friday for an indefinite stay, I suppose.



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There was a long distance call for her on my phone tonight. Between 8:30 and 9, however, I was busy listening to the Democratic Convention and so I suggested the operator try 8042, which is J. H.'s number where I assume J. H., Celeste and Sister might be gathered, probably none of them listening to the doings in Los Angeles although Celeste is mildly interested because Kennedy appears to be the inevitable winner of the nomination a couple or three days hence.

What I heard of the actual doings didn't move me greatly, and the Chamber of Commerce speech by the Mayor of Los Angeles seemed to me to be Chamber of Commerce stuff and not suited for the business to hand.

It was a great pleasure, however, to hear the familiar voice of E. Rosecoe Murrow who must be resuming his connection with CBS. I was also glad to hear Charles Collingwood of whom I had lost track months and months ago. I was mildly surprised I did not hear Eric Saveroid for what with his long years of service in Washington, I thought he might well have been considered a valuable contribution to the broadcasts covering both of the two Conventions. I was glad the keynote speech was comparatively short and I found it a little too political to suit my sense of fairness. It would have been pleasant to hear "the grandmother of the Democratic Party", as Mrs. Roosevelt is frequently dubbed, but I did not hear her voice although her name came up a couple of times.

A letter from Beltsville, Maryland, inquires about more gourds and I shall have to write them that they really should see how promisingly the new crop now forming looks. And speaking of gourds reminds me that in the pictures of the garden, you may or may not be able to make out the gourd vines growing on a bamboo fence to the right and left of Ghana. In the center of each of these to lines of gourds are sunflowers, much taller than the fence, but I doubt if they can be readily seen. I measured the height of one of these sunflower stalks this afternoon which struck me as being unusually tall. It measured nearly fifteen feet, which seems to be over-doing things a bit for a slender stalk that has a fairly heavy flower to support on top.

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Tuesday, July 12th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid. The day got started unpleasantly with Sister demonstrating how wacky and disagreeable she could be. Around 8:30, she had a conference with J. H. and left his office in tears of rage. She headed out for Shreveport before 9 and will probably be back this weekend.

I'm tapping out this memo a little later than usual because I kept on listening to the Los Angeles doings until 11:30, pleased that our two pet personalities present were getting such a tremendous ovation.

After supper, the store sent me half a big water-melon, half of which I shared with one of my friends passing this way at dusk dark, while later, as the convention progressed, I kept referring again and again to the chilled item, constantly beckoning me from the interior of the ice box. I hope they can send me more watermelon tonight keep me awake tomorrow night when the balloting gets going to select R. Kennedy.

Inez Irwin and some lady, both of whom have husbands in the Science Department at the college, came to see me in the afternoon. They were very pleasant and I enjoyed what they had to tell me about doings at the college and concerning town news about which I hadn't heard. In the latter category, they had something to say about Carl Henry, Jr., son of Carl Henry, senior, cousin of the local Henrys. Carl, Junior, has a 14 year old daughter, who was driving a car in town, although she has no license, and she pumped into a car belonging to and being driven by some colored youth who works for the Irwins. The girl stopped, observed the dent she had put into the other car and suggested to the colored youth that they scram in their respective directions and say nothing about it. The boy pointed out that he couldn't get insurance compensation on his car if he left the scene of the accident and they both remain where they were until an officer arrived. It was slap in the heart of town, but the girl was not at all sorry.



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said she was flying out and did so, just as a patrolman put in an appearance. He noted the license on the car driving off and made appropriate notations in his book, after which he waved for the colored boy to go on with his car. To everyone's astonishment, shortly afterward, the colored boy was arrested and taken to jail on a charge filed by Carl, junior. Dr. Irwin bailed out the boy and went around to see Carl, Jr., who expressed regret at having had the boy arrested and offered to pay bond costs for getting the boy out of jail, etc., etc. The whole thing was so cock-eyed that it made everyone furious at the obvious injustice of the thing. I think I shall take up the matter with the Enterprise with a view of giving that paper a chance to give the thing a bit of airing.

Thelma called this morning to say she and John would like to dash down within the next day or two with cameras to take shots of the banana garden before they fly off for Sapin next week. The Kyers have in mind flying to Portugal, using a car there and dashing around Portugal and Spain, getting back home before a sloth like me could turn around. If I remember correctly, they visited 8 countries in 17 days in Northern Europe a year or so ago and apparently the Santish fandango is going to be accomplished with the same rate of speed. Why they do such things, I cannot imagine. Thelma talked a little about the October tour and we both wondered if it would be worth while trying to engineer one this year, what with things so uncertain at this bend of the river and only a couple other houses available for this year's participants.

The copies of Sunday's Times carrying the Thana article which asked Bobina to send haven't come to hand as yet but I reckon they will arrive tomorrow or Thursday and I shall send a couple along for your delectation since in years to come it may be interesting for some people interested in this section of Louisiana to have an article, the text of which is contributed by one person of distinction and the photo by another prominent in this area.

And now I must fold up my beard and call it a day. I assume tomorrow night will be as prolonged from Los Angeles as was this date.....

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Wednesday, July 13th, 1960.

Memorandum: Yesterday was 101 and today 102, it is said, and I believe it. Even as yesterday, a flock of big old white clouds mounted the skies in the late afternoon. Thunder rolled up and down the river and not a drop of water came down. I intended remarking last night that the static under such conditions, made convention listening difficult until it came time for the presentation of the ex-Governor of Illinois. Then I thought I would try my pocket radio. I was delighted that it was much clearer than the standard unit and thus I was able to get that segment of the proceedings even so much clearer. Tonight I have listened for a while, not to the endless speeches to which nobody listens in the nominating and seconding temfoolery but to Bob Trout and his associates. At the moment some gent is doing a "great man who" oration about some Kansan whose name, I suppose, like all the rest, will be trotted out at the final sentence of the endless speech. And so I figured I might as well have a little chat with little Miss Lee while the dull business drones on and, if one is lucky, one may get to hear the polling of the first ballot before one falls asleep. J. H. was rather amusing at supper on the subject of the Wenk business. He says Sister doesn't know it but in reality she doesn't want a divorce but is merely going through the motions because she thinks she will annoy her husband. He declares she isn't nearly so insane as just plain mean. She called him this morning, he said, and complained because she had not received the sleeping pills which she had telephoned the husband.



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send her He said he didn't know when she was  
returning here, perhaps tomorrow. He didn't know.  
The more I think about it, the more convinced that  
when Whitfield Jack advised J. H. and the General  
to keep her away from Shreveport, he wasn't thinking  
so much about anything as the desire to have her  
out of annoying reach from her. I'm beginning  
to think it would be better if she remained in Shreveport  
to annoy her husband and the lawyers, thereby expending  
her impulse to keep any pot boiling, centered on  
urban rather than country folk.

I got off a shipment of gourds to the U. S.  
of Beltsville, Maryland, Agriculture station today, and  
on the strength of the dabbling in gourds, sat down  
and knocked off a dull column on gourds for a Cane River  
Memo of a week hence. I sent a note along with the  
gourds, pointing out that the shipment represented my  
contribution to the cause the Department is espousing. The  
truth of the matter is that if I were to bill the merchandise  
in conformity to the elaborate instructions sent in  
the original order, it would cost me more for  
secretarial assistance in getting the thing  
right than the total of the invoice would come to.

Two or three people have called me recently to  
inquire as to the identity of the person writing  
under the pen name of Frances Crane, or some such. The  
book, or mystery story, one of three in a book just  
issued, by whom, I know not, is called "The  
Buttercup Case" and it seems to me we have remarked upon  
this tale before, revolving about a primitive painter of color.  
I think I have the means of finding out the real name of  
Frances Crane and it will be a great pleasure to pass it along  
to you when I do.

Lucille Tinker Conahan phoned me today, asking  
if she might bring her sister to see me on the morrow.  
La Conahan was one of my hostesses last Pilgrimage.  
Her sister lives in Houston and has recently contributed  
something to Saturday Evening Post. I shall ask for  
details. And now back to Bob Trout in the booth.....

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Thursday, Bastille Day, 1960.

Memorandum: All day the thermometer has "hovered" around  
100. This evening about 6:30, however, it cooled  
off and a about a half inch of rain dropped down slowly.

I guess the peacocks welcomed an opportunity  
to take a bath. Anyway, they walked out from under the  
protection of the gallery where they had been supping,  
arose from the grounds of the Lucea reef and then  
after pausing there for only a minute or two, sailed upward  
again, alighting in the top of the big old-peach tree  
at the end of the garden in front of Lucea, perhaps  
40 or 50 feet above ground where they contentedly  
arranged themselves for the night was a slow drizzled  
rushed in darkness.

I have been listening to the Los Angeles convention  
and still find it a little on the dull side. I  
must say, however, I got some amusement out of the  
way the Johnson nomination for Vice President was  
engineered by acclamation. I gathered from him of  
the volume of sound coming forth when the chairman asked  
for a voice vote that not only were the delegates  
responding but the galleries as well. Off hand, I  
should guess the Yes and the No-responses were about  
even in volume but the chairman ruled that the Yes  
predominated and that was that and, although of dubious  
parliamentary preciseness, it achieved what the managers  
wanted and so perhaps that method of naming  
a Vice President in comparative harmony was a better method  
than dragging the operations through an endless wrangle  
which would have ultimately come up with the same decision  
but not before much unhappiness had been injected into the  
meeting.

I can think of no better way than seeing the  
die-hard Southern delegations than naming Johnson, although  
I, for the case of a single spectator, had supposed that  
Johnson would never be considered and that he would never accept.  
But now we are presented with a party that has a Presidential  
candidate too liberal for the conservatives and a Vice Presidential  
candidate too conservative for the liberals and I suppose  
that may well be the way party solidarity is attained.



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Thursday, July 15th, 1960.

At supper tonight, I was surprised to hear J. H. who can't stand Mrs. Roosevelt, declare that he had to admit that off all the nominating and seconding speeches made at the convention last night, the speech of Mrs. Roosevelt had more sense in it than all the other speeches combined. His dislike for Mrs. Roosevelt is based on this line of reasoning:

The regime of F. D. R. put through loads of legislation that took power out of the hands of the rich and brought the economic status of the nation closer into balance. F. D. R. was like clay in the hands of his wife and therefore it was his wife who ran the country and it is she, therefore, who is responsible for all the reforms that delighted the poor so much but infuriated the rich so completely. This over-simplification of things, this inability to find a scapegoat for all one's ills obviously accounts for this attitude on the part of many of the haters of Mrs. Roosevelt and although it would probably be readily agreed that she did exert a certain amount of influence on policy during the years between 1933 and 1945, historians will not attribute all of the Administration's doings exclusively to her, I think.

Across the nation today, the morning papers all carried the news of Mr. Kennedy's nomination, I suppose. I found it mildly coincidental that the Cane River Memo in today's Enterprise, the one entitled Hop, Skip and Jump, should have made reference to Mr. Kennedy without actually naming him. It was a Kennedy who had taken the lessons with the Brom-Seltzer boys for rapid reading -- a point about it being made in the column, although, as you may readily understand, I hadn't the vaguest notion that Mr. Kennedy's nomination would be announced at the same time the column appeared, what with that piece having been written a week or so earlier before the convention had even assembled.

A couple of carpenters were bounced in my direction today and I made the most of their presence by getting a lot of odds and ends attended to I took the opportunity to get some more benches made, much to my delight, since I feel gardens seldom have an over supply of such items that do so much to provide physical comfort of visitors inclined to absorb their surroundings.

It was pleasant to see Lucille Conahan and her sister this afternoon. The later, at the University of Texas, is acquainted, I discovered, with several of my friends there, and I shall be glad if she will, as she promised, find out the identity

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Friday, July 15th, 1960.

#### Memorandum:

A couple of degrees colder today, following last night's half inch of rain.

I'm glad the Democrats got their business folded up a little earlier than usual tonight. I liked the whole program and thought the acceptance speech by both Kennedy and Johnson just right and the Stevenson one just exactly suited to circumstances. I was sorry Mrs. Roosevelt did not appear. On the home front, I was surprised to receive a call from Dee Hertzog, inviting me to dine at Magnolia on Sunday, along with J. H., Celeste and one or two other people. Nothing was said about Sister and as yet she hasn't put in an appearance. Last Sunday she went to town to church and I reckon it is assumed she will this coming Sunday, too. As dinner is scheduled for 12 noon, that would make church in town and dinner in the country impossible anyway. I assume Dee will enjoy herself more than anyone. For the first time in the 36 years of her married life, she will be outside the shadow of Miss Sally, a difficult mother-in-law at best, and I suppose Dee thought the occasion an excellent one to bring Mat and me together, following the "Dear Sir" communication. Peer Dee and peer Mat -- having waited so long to begin some sort of a normal existence. If I can, by my presence, help fill in some of the chinks that, by the nature of things were bound to develop during the past 36 years, I shall be enchanted.

Mr. Hyde of the Louisiana Hotel called this morning at 8, asking if sometime today I would see Mr. Wilson of Dallas, -- something about a rare book or map or some such. I said I would see him at 8:30, and let the man go for a wonder, wasen time. He was a pleasant person and when I said there would be no books for sale, he accepted the statement at face value and we enjoyed a little tour in the dew



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and a cup of coffee across the fence when  
by chance we bumped into Celeste. What  
fascinated me about Mr. Wilson was the fact that  
he is a Nixon enthusiast, the first one I  
have encountered in a long time although  
I have no doubt that people like J. H. are  
Nixon fans but don't admit it. Come to think of  
it, probably Robin is a Nixon enthusiast, too, based  
on her enthusiasm for Whitaker Chambers and such like. Well,  
every man to his own preference and may Mr. Nixon  
not discover too many of them.

Earlier in the week, the Walkers had  
invited me to the Country Club for a swim and  
dinner based on shrimp but, fortunately, I had  
been uncertain at the time and so had asked that  
we trot out the rath cheek against  
some future frolic. Even as in the case  
of the lady doctor years ago when she and Don  
used to invite me to go places for weekends, so  
the Walkers simply can't comprehend that I really  
should prefer chatting with them on the phone,  
letting country club doings be devoted to those who  
have more time on their hands and nothing to do. I  
am so glad I did not miss tonight's Los Angeles  
doings, as I should have, had I gone to town,  
and what with these days quite busy, I was  
so happy at the end of the day to climb out of my soiled  
garments, splash through a bath and collapse  
for a little while before moving on to my  
desk.

There were quite a few pieces in the mail  
today, none of which did I get to read, what with  
a swing-out at the local honkey-tonk and all the secretaries having a pocket full of money  
as against this week's being on neighboring  
plantations, providing them compensation at the  
close of each day. There will be no seeing  
next week on Melrose and then the urge for reading  
will return and I shall get caught up a dab.....

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Sunday, July 17th, 1960.

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Memorandum: Hot yesterday, hot today until 2:00'clock when  
we had a sprinkle amounting to three tends of an inch  
along with cooler temperatures that are very pleasant  
tonight.

This weekend was as quiet and pleasant as last weekend  
was not. Sister called J. H. from Shreveport Friday  
to say she would return here on Monday.

Thanks to an absence of any first class main on Saturday,  
I was able to get caught up a little and I enclose an  
item or two, although none are of great moment.

The sisters-in-law, Ora and Claudia, brought  
twenty five or thirty wives of Knights of Columbus  
on Saturday afternoon for a little tour. Ora said that  
J. H. wanted to get rid of the ladies so the men  
could hold a meeting. After their tour here, the ladies  
returned to the J. H. Williams camp to join their  
husbands in a picnic. It was a little after 6  
when the ladies arrived here and as the heat of the day  
was spent, the little go-round was pleasant enough.  
I think they liked the jaunt through the gourd garden particularly  
because the place is unusually pretty just now, what with  
such a variety of half grown gourds suspended from  
the ceilings of the several trellises. There are  
so many a couple of feet in length, in various shades  
of white, green and cream, harmonizing so beautifully with  
the leafy canopy above them, that the arbors look  
unlike anything else in the arbor line that I have  
seen and the ladies seemed fascinated by the whole business.

I was particularly delighted when I found a maranka, --  
the same old club type which has always been a dark-dark  
green, emerge this year on a vine that is producing identical  
fruit but of white rather than green. The novelty is striking.



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Most of the ladies were from Mississippi but had all read Ora's article about the Ghana garden in the Shreveport Times. I never so much as entered the Ghana house but merely turned the visitors loose and let them go in or out as they pleased. With the sun about down, the Ghana garden seemed fresh and cool so that the African House, afterward, however much as attracted a soul to the second floor. At Yucca I did little guiding and let the guests absorb what, if anything, they pleased. The peacocks were putting on an act on the front gallery and these ladies with cameras seemed to get much pleasure out of recording them on film.

About 11:30 today, J. H., Celeste and I drove down to Magnolia for dinner. I found the place looking much better than the last time I was there. For one thing, the central hall running through the place has been painted, eliminating the deadly green and replacing it with white which gives some of the interesting portraits a much more advantageous setting. I knew not why no drinks were served before dinner while we chatted for half an hour. There were ten at dinner, the dinner beautiful and the service perfect. Oddly enough, champagne was served throughout dinner which lasted about 2 hours. Mat was gracious but as I was placed at Dee's end of the table, I got little chance to talk much with him and J. H. and I left for Melrose shortly after dinner. Naturally, no reference was made to the "Dear Sir" letter and Mat greeted me by my first name as though there had never been a Dear Sir letter. One thing I forgot to mention during the past week occurs to me. Mr. Morris who works in the Health Department, has a wife, Crockett, who has retired from the Matchless Times and now raises beautiful chrysanthemums. I haven't seen Mr. Morris in a year or two, Mrs. Morris in ten years. At the Health Office on Monday, the staff was chatting about Ora's article about Ghana and to everyone's surprise, Mr. Morris volunteered that "of course it's a good garden... my wife designed it for F. Don't you love that....."

10632

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Monday, July 18th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and humid and warm.

Thirty billion approaches to the subject wouldn't be enough to express my surprise and delight to find such an entrancing note by hand from little Miss Lee, the whole traveling in rapid and good order, having started out on Friday evening last past and making reference to a Friday morning memo which undoubtedly will arrive on the morrow.

It is just like the spirit of Lymé to be engaged in participating in the Netman-Marcus project and as in the case of the African House murals, the participation will be as direct. It is interesting that last Friday, about the time the letter from Lymé was in the office, I started out on a new task, so far as preparations for the Netman-Marcus business is concerned. I had planned a series of conventional sized pictures that would carry out some of the plantation primitive scenes I had envisioned when the thought came to me that I might as well undertake something a little more elaborate that might serve several purposes and so I made the most of having a carpenter to hand. Alton's papa, I lent him a hand in trotting out some composition boards, sort of beaver board type of thing, the same I had used for the frieze around the Ghana cabin. We measured these to a width of 12 or 14 inches and then strung them out to make a frieze for the mud wall of Yucca house giving on the white garden. The point was to cut them in such a fashion that the places that joined would always be at a point where windows and doors, or the frames thereof, would so coincide as to make the joining of the separate pieces be scarcely noticeable. Then we nailed them into their ultimate resting place but I got out of the way and provided a place where I could study the whole sweep with the artist eventually. We had just enough material to run the entire length of the wall and lacked only a piece about three or four feet in length which might fill the space on the west wall as between the long sweep and the double doors giving on the projecting room at the opposite end of the gallery from the chapel. Remarkable to relate, I began casting about for something to fill that final segment and I stumbled slap over a piece of the same material that just fitted and required not carpentry at all.



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My thought at the time was that the artist can be  
jockeyed into doing another mural that will incorporate the  
type of plantation primitives I think the Neiman Marcus project  
will do best with. My thought is to get the artist started  
on this part toward the end of the month, after the entire  
mural has been chalked in. This will provide an opportunity for  
the Wolf-Meiman-Marcus photographers and even Little Miss Rocket,  
with illustrations for magazine articles of the artist on  
a ladder at work which ought to be timely. At the same time, I  
thought that if the mural turns out half as striking as I hope, it  
might provide a wonderful window piece for the expansive display window  
of Neiman-Marcus when the fabrics are ready for presentation  
to the public and, finally, the frieze itself will ultimately  
lend color and delight to the Yucca gallery, once they have served  
their several purposes.

Not being quite sure just how all this preparation could be swung  
in such a short time as between now and the first of August, I went  
with it regardless and thus only you can imagine how surprised and deli  
I was today when I discovered that, as always, little Miss  
Lee had anticipated everything and was standing staunchly right beside

On the home front, things were quiet. Celeste  
spent the day in Alexandria. Sister who had phoned on Friday  
she would return today, had not done so by first dark. J. H.  
went to Shreveport today, -- probably to see about things.  
I didn't know it until 6:30 tonight but it seems Lloyd spent  
some part of the night here, departing at 5:30. His school  
papa called this afternoon to ask if that was true and was  
given an affirmative answer.

On Saturday afternoon, Doreath's sister, wife of Clyde  
Anthony, ate rat poison but wouldn't let herself be  
taken to a doctor although her mouth was burning badly.  
My guess is she didn't swallow much, -- hope. And thus  
begins a week, the happier for today's message from Lyme.....

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Tuesday, July 19th, 1960.

Memorandum  
Pure summer with a promise of a shower  
in the afternoon that never developed.

The morning post brought me endless delight in  
the arrival of the Thursday letter that was posted  
on Friday morning.

It goes without saying I am delighted that  
a breathing spell stretches just ahead and  
I hold the thought the rest and salt air provided by the  
coast of the Old Dominion may hold endless delights  
for little Miss Lee. Should have glimpsed Cousin  
Arthur seems extraordinary. I didn't glimpse him but I heard  
his voice, casting his delegation's votes for Johnson.  
From the sublime to the ridiculous, the letter from Robina  
arriving in today's post also indicates she is utterly  
bra in-washed by the Shreveport Times in her political thinking.  
Every expression in that field I have ever heard her make  
has been right out of a Times editorial page.

It's almost incredible that anyone of her good sense  
should go so hay-wire on political matters and  
I must say I thought she quite out-did herself when  
she got around to endorsing Barry Goldwater, the  
ultimate in die-hards in a die-hard party.  
I shall write her later tonight, expressing the hope  
that the republican may select Nixon and Goldwater as  
their standard-bearers for that would really  
give the electorate an opportunity to select somebody  
who thinks William McKinley is still around and  
President of the United States since the Goldwater mind  
hasn't quite arrived in the 20th century as yet.

Celeste had girl friends from Mansura to spend the day and  
invited Dee up from Magnolia for luncheon. I  
was mildly surprised when Celeste called in in mid afternoon,



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saying Mat had asked Dee to see if I would give him three dipper gourds which he would like to give to a friend in Alexandria. Mat must have forgotten his "Dear Sir" letter so that he now has no qualms about beggin special gourds from me. I laugh every time I think of it.

I'm wondering how long it may have been since I wrote Carrie, giving her Juanita's number and address and telling her she is prepared to elp down a hundred bucks for a Demmon painting of a magnolia. A call I from Juanita B. reports she hasn't heard a peep out of Briarwood and I, too, haven't heard a ripple since I wrote her which, if you don't mind, is a mighty poor way of doing business on the part of Briarwood, it seems to me.

Your memory on every point constantly astonishes me and the obituary attached to your letter is a further case in point. I, of course, had not heard of the death of Eugene de Ligne. It was only today that I learned of the death of the husband of the lady editor of the Baton Rouge paper, the event transpiring several months ago. I shall write several letters on the two above events tonight for I admired the prince enormously and, in the Baton Rouge case, I admire members of the man's family much a though it has been a long time since I have seen either sets o people.

I'm not sure about the mid-July issue of Life but I believe it is issued under the date of the 17th. In any event, my copy usually comes to hand on Saturday but this last week it failed to arrive and reached me only today and I haven't had an opportunity to turn through it. I am not even sure of the date of the issue in which the article about the Congo appears but it is certainly a July issue and probably about the middle. I, S. Willard, when I talked with her on Saturday night, remarked that the Carvers in Hatchitoches had received their copy which contained an article either by or about David Snell who was recently in the Congo where he got beaten up by the participants in the disorders there I mention the matter, thinking you might be interested in seeing what Ada Jack Carver Snell's son had to say about it. He is back in Paris now, Irma reports, where, as you know, he heads Life's Paris bureau.

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Wednesday, July 20th, 1960.

# Memorandum:

Hot. As is characteristic of this region, every afternoon huge white marble clouds pile up in the deep blue skies, forming marvelous backdrops for the landscape and then, at evening, gradually vanish below the horizon, only to appear 24 hours later to put on the same splendid show.

The manager and public relations head of Valley Electric came to noon dinner, along with Miss Cammie's youngest son in his usually disagreeable frame of mind. One of the Valley Electric men remarked that he had enjoyed the article in the Times about the Ghana garden to which Dan sourly replied that he had seen the article but hadn't witnessed any evidence of the vegetables. The clerk observed the extra from the gumbo of which he had just had two helpings and the tomatoes in front of him were from Ghana. I said nothing.

The recent legislature passed a flock of laws, most of which have already been signed into law. One of these cuts off welfare assistance to a person living with a person to whom he or she is not married and to women who have had children since going on welfare, although unmarried. In the plantation regions, marriage has often been a formality about which people who have found their desired life mate haven't bothered much about. I recall Fugabou once remarking that he and Maude had never married because it seemed that people getting married were always getting divorces while those who didn't go through the ceremony usually lived happily ever after.

The first person I heard of at this end of the river who has been cut off the welfare rolls is McKinley Brown. Twenty five years ago, McKinley took unto himself a wife in the person of the Dark Duke's sister. I suppose



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there are five or six children in this common law arrangement and it seems to have been quite successful. About a year ago, McKinley was stricken with a heart attack and was pronounced incapable of physical work. This entitled him to welfare assistance and things have rocked along well enough until this week when, because of the new law, he was cut off from the welfare stipend. What the next move is, I know not. Perhaps he can get a legal marriage certificate by obtaining a license and promising a preacher he will take the woman with whom he has been living to wife.

In the case of the unwed mothers, or, more particularly, in the case of the children, I find myself wondering how they are going to make out. There still seem to be so many riddles in life that haven't been adequately solved.

I saw Pat at the store for a moment this afternoon. He asked me if I had ever heard from Carrie about doing a magnolia picture for Juanita B. I had to confess that only silence had obtained since I wrote Carrie some weeks back.

I talked on the phone with Thelma today. As President of the Hysterical Ladies, she has endorsed, --on or in the name of her organization, -- the current efforts being made to get a Hollyday Inn established in Natchitoches. I believe stock is being sold at present, a site selected, northwest of town near the Country Club, on Highway No. 1 and many people feel this new caravanserie will be helpful in the tourist trade. Just what the several motel operators, the hotel, restaurants and so forth may think about it, I haven't heard as yet.

She said John has driven to Shreveport three times during the past three days to have some dental work attended to in anticipation of their brief vacation in the Iberian Peninsula a couple of weeks hence. With excellent dentists in town, it isn't clear to me why the daily trips to Shreveport have to be made but possibly I don't take into consideration the fact that road-running is not a bore but a pleasure to many.

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Thursday, July 21st, 1960.

Memorandum:

The postman, for no known reason, made his rounds today an hour and a half earlier than usual, bringing mighty little mail and taking away none of my making since he had long since departed before I made my rounds at the accustomed hour.

When you have time, you will enjoy Aunt Willie's letter. It contains no news of special interest but the descriptive phrases are excellent. I had written her a letter of condolence on receiving news of her sister's death but I found no reference to her sister at all in this letter which continues to strike me as a little odd both from the Baton Rouge and Monks Corner quarters, what with no reference has ever spoken direction of that event.

.....The only news item that was mildly surprising was the tentative plan, later dropped, that the Registers and Mahiers should drive to The Bluff in August. Perhaps the Mahiers are trying to do a bit of patching up of domestic matters, even as I have attempted so unsuccessfully in the past. That this attempt on their part should have fallen through surprises me not at all, of course and I still think a dab of patching would still be most desirable.

I heard a tale from Carmen today which exemplifies the 10 year old child complex I have witnessed on occasion across the fence, assuming it to be true. I take everything Carmen says with a grain of salt but I pass this episode along regardless. There was a card party in town yesterday which both she and Celeste attended, --four or five tables,-- and that is unusual in itself since they do not circulate in the same crowds usually. Note that as it may, when the games were tallied, the hostess declared Carmen to have the highest score and whatever the



Just poor business in the city.



10641

For the first time, perhaps in months, perhaps in years, I talked with Ralph and Sarah Combs on the 'phone this evening. I was glad Ralph answered because I had found a couple of excellent chinquapin trees which I thought would be suitable for their garden, remembering that some years back, Ralph had been consulting catalogues in quest of same.

I think the intensity of the panic which has always seemed to be gripping the Combs ménage may be due in part to the emphasis placed on "misere" but it is perfectly true that one or another member of that family is forever a hospital patient and it just chanced that Julian, the son, who was in the hospital last Spring when Madam Regard was there, had just returned from the hospital today for more kidney tests and Sarah's mother in Alexandria had suffered five strokes last week, etc., etc., but Sarah takes such things philosophically enough and was able to give me some confidential pointers on how some of my friends can hope to get re-instated on the Welfare rolls and how one might go about getting good old Zelma on the receiving end of some State stipend, all of which made me very glad.

I'm bound to knock off a few letters, staving off visits next weekend. I am not really expecting anyone in particular but there are three or four cases, like Helen's, in which people have threatened to honor me with a Sunday visit one of these days and I certainly don't want too big a mob around on the 31st, when the Dallas Wolves are roaming the gardens.

I thought of James today when we had our first figs of the season. --he is so fond of fresh figs. I like them very much, too, but I think I do not have the mania for them that he does and Celeste and everyone else I know in these parts. This afternoon about 6 o'clock, I chanced to be passing a big old fig tree in the wood lot to the east of the big house where I sighted three boys busy eating figs up in the tree. When they saw me, their activities ceased abruptly and each one remained as motionless as a statue, if you can imagine three statues up in a tree. I simulated interest in something just beyond the tree and maintained my even pace and so they guessed I had never glimpsed them and hope they went on with their good work....

10642

Sunday, July 24th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Saturday hot, Sunday hot until noon when an inch of rain came down with gusto while we were eating midday meal and I loved every drop of both the manna from earth and from Heaven. Well, Saturday was election day with a couple of surprises and a few non-surprises. In the latter category, Earl Long got enough votes to be in a run-off late in August. After all the crackpot performances of the past year, one would think he wouldn't get any votes but that would be based on the theory that there aren't hilly-billies and that would be wrong.

R. B. Williams lost his race for a judgeship by a narrow margin which was a mild surprise and Lester Hughes lost the District Attorney race which was also a mild surprise. R. B. worked hard but had too much weight of an unpopular and wealthy set of relatives against him. Madam Beaufort, J. H. Williams and such like who aren't popular with any level of the populace. Lester never bothered to work for his election while his opponent did. I gather it is just as well a new District Attorney takes over any way, Lester has fiddled with the office for so long that he seems to be pretty stale.

As for R. B., his failure to win the race may have some financial advantages, at least. Everybody knows that his law practice, which, had he been elected, he would have had to give up, is far more lucrative than a judge's salary and so his opponent gets the honor and R. B. gets the money and thus his depression cannot be too great.

About 6:30 Saturday night, the artist called on behalf of Blythe, reporting that Blythe was at the camp and was inviting me over to sup with her and Miriam Johnson. I thought the invitation a little late in arriving, especially as I had already supped at 5. But I fiddled around with the radio, listening to Invitation to Learning examine Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, which I enjoyed and



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then for a little work in the Ghana garden, followed by a shower, after which, the sun being now set, I enjoyed a leisurely stroll over to the camp. Naturally my thoughts traveled in a Lyme direction in such a place and as there wasn't a breath of air stirring, the surface of the river was as smooth as a mirror and just as silvery.

Along about 8:30, I discovered I was beginning to feel vaguely hungry and when supper was served, I did my duty by it. Joan had remained in Alexandria, having a touch of kidney trouble and I found it pleasant to chat with the two ladies fully as much as I should have, perhaps more, if Joan had been there, too.

Blythe plans to go to Shreveport on Tuesday and I hope the Lord she doesn't bring anybody back with her. While there, she says she is going to listen attentively to the Republican convention. Her favorite choice for the Vice Presidential nominee is Barry Goldwater, no less. I told her I certainly hoped he would win and that I was sure she could have him without any fear that I should evince the slightest manifestation of jealousy.

"Si j'ai bonne memoire", it was this week in July of last year that the butterfly lilies began their seasonal parade. They will delay their lovely progress this year, it appears for they are just beginning to form the cone-like appurtenance from which the floral butterflies eventually unfold and from where I sit, it would seem that it will probably be at least another ten days or two weeks before the blessed event gets under way. As everything else this year has been dragging its feet in the realm of vegetation, the lilies must be using the same time table.

Twice the artist phoned me today, each time I am reporting there were Texas people at her house, hoping to visit the Ghana garden they had read about in the Shreveport Times. I did not see any of the people, however, although I spoke with them on the phone, explaining that the rain had put too many mud puddles in the garden to make explorations by ladies in fine footgear unwise.

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Monday, July 25th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid.

Instead of taking off for Alexandria at 8 o'clock this morning, Celeste took off around 4:30 A.M., instead. J. H. said she had a telephone about 4 and had departed forthwith. He asked her to call the telephone to let us know how things were going but she did not do so. While performing my office as Master of the Hound about 6 tonight, she returned. She said her mother was about as usual but that she had left early because the person who stays with Madam Regard hadn't been able to find the medicine that was supposed to have been given at 4 o'clock or some such time. I gather the whole thing was much a-do about nothing and it was obvious Celeste felt Fate was being unkind to her.

I had forgotten that I. S. Willard had told me a few days back that she would pause early on Monday morning to observe a gourd when heading toward Baton Rouge.

Naturally, I have no idea how early is "early" but having forgotten the whole thing, I was mildly surprised when she put in an appearance a little after 11. She started to park on the duff but was whisked away to the gourd garden and thence to her car before 11:30 when dinner was to be served here. I knew not if there might be pleasant or unpleasant company at the board and although it turned out to be happy enough, -- J. H., the clerk and I, still, I was not sorry I had put her in her car and got her headed out in the right direction for I had a heavy program ahead of me and was glad to complete this unexpected interlude so that I might get on to other things. My afternoon was interrupted when some friends of the General, a Baton Rouge judge, wife, child and some Louisville guests arrived unannounced. He had a nice go-round and the judge loved everything, including the couple of dipper gourds he obviously wanted so badly.

From 6 until 10 tonight, I listened to Republican convention doings in Chicago over CBS. I know not if some local disturbance was to blame or if the Republicans were too noisy to permit good reception. I found the racket especially disconcerting during the earlier speeches, including Underwood of West Virginia and Hoover of whom there is but one aged 85. During the balance of the broadcast,



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Monday, July 26th, 1960.

there seemed to be greater clarity and I could heard the  
Walter Judd keynote address very distinctly.

I thought the Judd speech masterfully contrived  
and skillfully presented with the usually amount of factual  
fancy foot-work and oratorical legerdemain. Judd, like  
most politicians, is always disturbing since he actually seems to  
believe in the truth of what he is saying. Like the Republican  
of 4 and of 8 years ago, Judd seems to give things a twist  
to make it appear the Democrats invited the Communists  
to take over China and there were quite a few equally  
ridiculous statements but that is merely political artillery  
of which politics will never do away with whenever an election  
is in the offing. I thought it mildly amusing earlier in the  
proceedings that Barry Goldwater said he would introduce  
all the people running for the Senate on the Republican  
ticket and proceeded to forget to name at least 3 whom  
Senator Morton had to summon up for applause after Mr.  
Goldwater had departed from the speaker's stand.  
It's such a pity Senator Goldwater isn't  
nominated for the Vice Presidency or, even better, for  
the Presidency itself. He is so typically  
the die-hardest of the Old Guard and must be anathema  
to people like Rockefeller.  
You will be interested to learn that the artist  
began the Yucca mural or frieze today. She started  
out about 10 or 12 feet, a section a little less  
than a third of the whole piece. I believe, if I can  
hold her back to reasonable speed, a goodly section but  
the complete thing will be finished by this week end,  
and I am hoping the Dallas Wolves will be able to see this contempor-  
ary bit of painting in its creative stage for it  
seems to me it will be even more interesting to them  
if they can inspect it in its growing state.

And now, because I spent the whole evening listening  
to the political claptrap, I must roll up my  
sleeves and get busy with the day's mail. I had  
held the thought the Atlantic surf may be invigorating where  
Little Miss Lee chances to be sampling it. . . . .

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Tuesday, July 26th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid.

It was an unexpected plaisir today when the postman  
handed me a card from little Miss Lee, indicating the  
progress of her travels and I was glad she had found  
such a pleasant stopping place along the way.

About 6 this morning, I had a call from the Rocket out  
of Baton Rouge. She said she had talked with Ola Mae who had  
told her there was a letter at Advertising Mart for her. As  
the call was long distance, I thought it would save time  
by not going into the contents of the letter and I asked  
her if Ola Mae had read it to her. She said she had not. I  
asked if she had received a letter in Baton Rouge covering  
the same matter. She said she had received a special delivery there  
several weeks ago. It's nice knowing she received that  
one in which I recommended she contact Warren for a  
Hunter story of which or for which she had had films. Of course  
she never acknowledged that one either. Well, anyway,  
assuming she did know something about the Sunday  
conference, I referred to it and she said she  
would be down about 10 in the morning and did I think  
it would be alright if she brought Ola Mae with her. I said  
that if we were to have others present than those  
immediately concerned, I should think Ola Mae would  
be that person. She seemed a little surprised at the "if" part  
of the sentence.

Knowing those gals, separately and jointly, I put  
no stock whatsoever in the magical hour of 10 as  
mentioned in her Sunday suggestion. I certainly would  
not suggest she break bread here, bread breaking hour being at  
11:30 and the prospective hostess most fussy about  
the exact minute. I have too often waited hours and  
days and months for those two to keep their appointments and  
there is no use in me being made uneasy by them any more.  
She asked me if I would make an appointment or rather a



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reservation at the Louisianne motel in town for tonight for her and her two nephews. I would. She said she would arrive late tonight and leave before dawning for Marshall. I thought that was fine.

The artist delivered the first two sections of the Yucca frieze this noon and asked for the next sections for tonight and tomorrow. The stuff she delivered was childish, pretty and uninspired. I had hopes she might do better tonight but was depressed on that point when late this afternoon, Dr. Talley, the lady doctor of New Orleans arrived at Ghana to say Howdy and confess she had just purchased 7 pictures from the artist. That probably meant fire water for tonight and may the good Lord help the frieze. Dr. Talley will return in November and I only regret she had to hit it today in July.

I began listening to the "epulican Convention when it started this evening but I was distracted when Sister 'phoned from next door, asking if I didn't want some fish for the sugar pot. But that was merely a ruse to get me to help her to unload a carful of plunder, all of which might just as well have waited until the morrow for the unpacking and carry to the big house. Assured that I didn't know enough to pour a gold fish from a dish into the pot, she had to undertake that difficult operation and then she had to have some supper, etc., etc., and so it was well into the Eisenhower speech before I got back to the peace of Yucca. I felt a little shame-faced for everybody when, following the President's speech, the President of the Republican Clubs pronounced the eulogy, having Mrs. Eisenhower, no less, as its object. I know nothing about Mrs. Eisenhower and so far as I know she is alright as an ordinary military wife but when I learned about what back an inspiration she had been to everybody across the nation, it seemed to me that was putting it on a little thick. And now, what with the hour advancing, I fold up, holding the thought the current vacation is progressing delightfully.....

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Wednesday, July 27th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid.  
I was glad to have some folks from the field to give me a hand today for I want to do a little pushing around of primitives before the week end arrives.

The artist, as I feared, converted some of her Tally funds into fire water as was evidenced by the sections of the frieze delivered today, she having worked on them last night until late, she said.

The center piece of the whole business was to be a baptisin, --a long row of white robed "candidates", moving from the Church to the river, and on the other side of the church, a long line of parishoners marching toward the scene of activity. The results of the night's painting was a long line of Parishoners moving slap across the canvas, both to right and left of the church, approaching the water where one sees the deacons but no parade of people in white robes, heading toward the water. But I shall be able to handle the story alright although my initial concept of the picture which the artist, herself, sketched in before painting, evaporated somewhere along the way with last night's fire water. I reckon the artist gets so busy stirring up ladies in costumes of gay design and everything fades from her mind so far as the episode she is supposed to be depicting. One thing is certain the final composition will hold a suggestion of the primitive if for no other reason than its lack of continuity.

A picture of people going to a baptisin where there's no baptisin seems to be somewhat original and so I shall present the thing when it is finally finished.

There was an air mail from Helen today and I shall be curious to learn its contents. The first secretary to turn up today arrived tonight, following a revival session on



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Little River. The rumpus with the Louisiana delegation at the Chicago convention was just being reported and so I sent the secretary on his way and I kept tuned in on the Republican doings.

interruption....a telephone from Ora, saying Ann had seen Carolyn in Baton Rouge a day or two back. C. had asked A. to tell her mother she wanted to see her sometime Sunday when she expected to be in Natchitoches. Ora wondered if I knew when, how I had enjoyed tonight's convention, etc. I said I liked the operations in Chicago but didn't advise her to stay home on Sunday awaiting a call.

As for the convention, I thought the Dewey speech effective and net up to a very high standard, calling Mr. Kennedy a "smart Alec". I thought the Nixon press interview at the conclusion of the night's session excellently carried out. It showed Mr. Nixon in the role of a gentleman which is novel at least, was one contrasts it to some of his other campaign roles.

And now I shall be looking forward to tomorrow night's final session.

In spite of the desire of the mid-West Governors to have a personality from the mid-West named Vice President in order, as they state frankly, to help gain Congressional seats in that area, I am hoping "cranky Mr. Lodge" may get the job. I suppose that among other reasons, Mr. Nixon wants Lodge, not so much for the sake of Lodge as for the sake of Massachusetts, what wit Messrs. Lodge and Kennedy hailing from the same State.

What surprises me most about the conventions is that they both contained such strong racial planks. You told me, I believe, that Howard K. Smith of CBS hails from Ferriday, Louisiana. He remarked tonight that twenty years ago, he, as a Southerner, would never have been able to imagine the part or the other, let alone both, being able to get planks for such racial liberality incorporated into the respective Party platforms.

And now I must start folding up my beard and calling it a day. I am hoping the Lyme traveler may have had an

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Thursday, July 28th, 1960.

Memorandum;

Hot and humid.

In the post came a message from little Miss Lee and I was pleased to learn of her presence in the neighborhood of a State capitol which, if memory serves, was designed by our third President of the United States. I assume one must have passed through the neighborhood, converted into a wilderness by the boys in the blue and the gay a century back. It always makes reading about doings in this period more interesting if one has traversed the terrain.

The artist called me this morning to say she had finished the two final sections of the frieze. From the brevity of the time involved in the painting, it was obvious she had done a slap-dab job which she had, I learned, when I viewed them. She will pass this way on the morrow to paint in one or two things, impossible as they are at the moment, and then I shall let the whole thing go. Where two sections join, a big leafy tree is constructed to conceal the fact that the picture is made up of sections. Although she herself had sketched in one of these trees, when she painted the scene, she slapped out a fine luxuriant pecan tree, covering this physical separation of the boards, and then painted only one half the tree, thereby, instead of letting the eye slide over the seam, it has the contrary effect of drawing the eye to that particular spot for, after all, a tree, cut in half vertically does present a striking appearance.

The figures on the last two boards are painted in a larger scale and different shading, making them seem but scantily related to the balance of the frieze and, fortunately, I guess, she quite out-did herself when she painted what she might describe as a mule, although, in structure, it seems to be in no way related to another mule in the adjoining panel, for the one on the final dy's board looks precisely like a turtle so far as shell and legs are concerned, but the head suggests that of a rabbit which, you will agree, is odd by way of combination. One thing is certain, the mule-turtle-rabbit creation reveals a fulsome sense of imagination which nobody can deny.



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The Letter from Helen speaks for itself. I, for one, have never understood why Helen, when planning a week end for this area, invariably has to bring more than a single companion. Well do I recall the time she had to bring not only Lucille but Ida Oran to boot. And now it is her sister and somebody else. It seems to me one always gets farther in traveling if one keeps the number of associates down to a minimum but as I never travel, perhaps there are unsuspected advantages in numbers that have evolved since last I took to the highways.

I am glad she is leaving it to me to say when she should gather up her companions and head out in this direction. The presence of the current resident here makes visitations so unpleasant, I shall delay recommending any time to Helen indefinitely.

Be it remembered that the Rocket envisions turning a film on the artist within the next few weeks, and I certainly don't want any more people around the powder keg than is absolutely necessary.

Well, I listened to the final session of the Republican convention and got a laugh out of the doings when one delegate from Texas wouldn't vote for Lodge "because he's too liberal", which just goes to show how conservative some delegates can be.

Mr. Nixon's acceptance speech struck me as more like the Nixon of 1952 and I assume it will get more so as the week between now and November drag along in the political field. I'm already tire of all the half truths that will be dished out as gospel in the months ahead but I'm grateful I can turn out the more tiresome rantings although I must say I feel sorry for the poor manipulators of news media who will have to be sticking with it throughout.....

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Friday, July 29th, 11960.

Hot. Yesterday Shreveport reported 96, Hatchitoches 102 and today I never glanced in the direction of a thermometer, being too busy casting about for dry garments.

Tonight's national weather picture predicts a hurricane for the East coast. I hold the thought nobody may be trying to negotiate the highways when the twisters are swirling about.

I was mildly surprised this morning when, in answering my phone, I recognized Mrs. Johnson, calling from the Alexandria area. She had asked the Matchitoches operator to get her 8042 and had been given 8043. She said she was calling on behalf of Dr. Sproul, Madam Regad's physician down yonder. Assuming the message might be urgent, I indulged in no personal conversation.

As J. H. was a dinner at the big house, I assume Celeste had been called to see about her mam. I gathered from something said at supper that they may have moved Madam Regard back to the Watchtch ho pital but that is only a surmise. I shall probably learn all over the coffee cups in the morning. I've never seen a place quite like this one where everyone assumes one knows what's cooking and accordingly never bothers to enlighten one but at the same time always pre-supposes one knows all when any aspect of a situation is brought up.

I imagine Madam Regard is in reality more of a hospital than a nursing home case and it is my understanding that in the case of some nursing homes, the patients requiring frequent attention are jockeyed into hospitals whenever possible.

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I have been thinking of the measure of truth in the old adage, --no great loss without some small gain. These thoughts are induced by the present uproar dominating the local bend of the river. For some time I have been conscious of the fact that I ought to reduce and now this has been made easier by the nerve strain that tends to discourage the appetite. At supper tonight, J. H. remarked that I wasn't eating any thing and I attributed the circumstance to the extreme heat, saying I felt better if I ate less when it is so warm. In the meantime, I don't crave food although I do relish a ripe tomato, plucked from the vines and I continue pumping in plenty of liquids which supply more than I really need while the current reducing effort is in progress. I hold the thought that the present visitation may not last much longer and perhaps at its termination, I shall rejoice that it at least achieved a more svelt figure. Smile.

Now that both political conventions are over, perhaps everyone will tend to get back to former routines. I must say I looked forward to remaining glued at the radio during the nightly performances and desk work got up off and things generally held in suspension during the proceedings but I shall begin catching up a gain during the next week, I believe, and I shall not feel the urge to listen to campaign speeches with the same regularity that I tuned in on Los Angeles and Chicago.

The trellis in the gourd section are beginning to claim more attention as the weight of the emerging crop increases. The bamboo lattice of the roof, while adequate to support the load, is incapable of receiving much additional weight. Occasionally, however, some upright poles, projecting perhaps 15 feet or so above the trellises begin sagging with the unexpected amount of fruit and when this proves too great for the poles to sustain, the whole business crashes to the trellis roof and a sag results. After that, if one is to penetrate the corridor effected, a mighty lot of lifting and propping is in order, --and the year's crop continues to increase. I reckon about half the vines are in production and I can only wonder what it will be like when they all really get going.....

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Sunday, July 31st, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot, inordinately humid all week end.

Saturday afternoon about 1:30, Ann Cordell called from town, saying she and a friend were heading toward the Gulf Coast and would love to pause at this bend of the stream. They came and I was glad to see them both. We had a pleasant African go-round and a very pleasant chat. Of course, I wanted to parade the peacocks for Anne but they were hiding some place and never did show up.

No sooner than my guests were gone, J. H. sent me five more guineas and I shall see what I can do with them. People on the plantation are losing most of their smaller chickens and guineas as a result of the perpetual cotton and pecane spraying but I'm hoping that the vegetation in the gardens may absorb a lot of the "ghastly dew" and that the food I provide for the younger feathered friends may fill them up sufficiently to discourage foraging on their part where the chemicals knock out the bugs and, in turn, knock out the birds if they escape of "dew" but feed on the insects.

This morning about 9, the Rocket called from Old Bonita, saying she would be unable to get down by 10 o'clock as she had planned. She said she is having her house in the country decorated by the introduction of brick walls, replacing the wooden walls. Some old brick had been found somewhere and she was conferring with a mason about doing the work.

She accordingly arrived here about 12:30 and we could chant a little before Martin, the Wolf contingent and the primitive inspection began.

I liked everybody and everybody seemed to be crazy about what they had to see. There had been a quick sprinkle about noon which made the air humid to the point of saturation and a dazzling sunshine seemed to increase the heat.

It did seem as though it took the people a long time to re-load their cameras and they must have taken yards and yards of color shots of the ..... said in his own way to be a good man.



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endless examples of Hunter creations. After a couple of hours, I withdrew from the upper chamber of the African House to concentrate on some ice cracking and the preparation of a cold gin drink which was ready when the party arrived on the Yucca gallery where a fan was circulating the air a little.

Mr. Wolf selected five pictures he wanted to purchase and take with him and as they were planning to drive Martin to Marshall and then go on to Dallas tonight, --a distance of perhaps 400 miles from here, they began making signs of imminent departure by 3:30.

To my surprise, nothing of a business nature was brought up and Martin opined to me that he assumed they wanted to mull over what they had seen, the films, etc., before taking up the details. I have no doubt they were genuinely interested since they went to so much trouble to take such a yardage of color film. Originally it had been planned that a Dupont representative and Dupont designers would accompany them here but Martin said that it had occurred to Howard Wolf and him that they could pass along particulars to Dupont.

And so they Hirsch-Wolf car drove off, planning to pause at the artist's house on their way, and the Rocket remained for half an hour to chat a little, after which she was supposed to return to Marshall. She said she wondered what would come of it all. I asked if she felt Martin, with whom she had talked on Saturday, was expecting a cut in the business that may result. She said she was sure he was expecting a cut. How all that remains is to see if there is to be any cut or anything on which one may carve. As of the moment, it appears to me the visit was altogether pleasant and probably holds the promise of profit although I shouldn't be surprised if we did or did not hear anything more about the plans.

At the Natchitoches hospital, Madam Regard is said to feel mighty happy to be back. This afternoon Ette Levy died. On the radio I heard the President had returned to Newport which made me hope the hurricane had played out and that Little Miss Lee was safe at home again in Lyme.....

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Monday, August 1st, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot.

I was reminded on two or three occasions today of that jingle beginning:

"When people all around are making faces  
And all the world's a-jangle and a-jar....."

It started at breakfast when our guest put in an appearance making a tremendous racket about something which I believe had to do with laundry but I did not remain to listen to a second verse.

Over the coffee cups a couple of hours later, mine hostess came to sit quite close beside me, remarking that she had some wonderful news she wanted to confide to me only. I was sure it was something that would delight everyone when it came to pass and so, of course, was all ears and expectation. It turns out that Tootie and some of the other girls are going down to False River in the He Roads area on Wednesday morning to remain until Friday morning and they want mine hostess to go with them. What a remarkable piece of news and you may well imagine how thrilled was the lady at the prospect.

Mid morning brought Lloyd down in his own car from Shreveport. He seemed so cordial and so entranced at the prospect of a busy day ahead of him for he had brought his repeating rifle to give our feathered friends a going over. He didn't remain long at the dinner table, being so intent on keeping the work going. At demi-tasse time, his mama seemed to go quite out of her head. She complained that two women on Saturday whom she understood were friends of mine from Arkansas, had invaded the place quite drunk, chased through the house, etc. I expressed amazement that J.H. would have sent two such characters in such a condition to me. That seemed to surprise the speaker, too, but the ranting continued until I got up and left.

This afternoon about 2, I went to the store and



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was surprised to see Joan Fratz on the gallery. We chatted a little until Blythe came out after having had a session with Sister who had been sent for. Perhaps they invited Sister to visit them in Alexandria, as they invited me. Sister was back for supper and I did not inquire anything about Blythe.

About 11:30 this morning, I responded to the telephone and recalled a voice from the past in the person of Rosalind Aswell. She apologized for the length of time it has been since last she communicated with me. It's my guess that it has been at least a year or a year and a half. Be that as it may, I realized, of course, that she must have some favor she wanted me to grant. I was right. Some man on U. S. Steel of years back at the time when she was doing drawings for that concern, or was it Bethlehem, is bringing his son to New Orleans for a look around and although she tried to discourage it, he will include the Hatchitoches region in his tour. Rosalyn, of course, has the problem of entertaining him and what could be more convenient than palming off an afternoon on Melrose. I told her that it was impossible at the moment but that I would see within the next ten days, when he is scheduled to arrive, what, if anything could be done. I doubt if anything can. I think she had hoped to get a little entertaining done by Helma and John with the college as a backdrop but they leave this Friday by air for Frankfurt and from there will go out across Switzerland, France, Spain and Portugal by car. Ora called a little after 1, asking if I had seen anything of the pocket who had sent her the message from Baton Rouge about a Sunday conference. She had been home all day but had seen "nie hide, nie hair" which is certainly bad. And so begins August and may there be brighter segments ahead.....

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Tuesday, August 2nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid with much clouds all afternoon and much moonlight tonight.

Naturally, I was distressed when the radio this morning announced that during the night, lightning had struck noble Greenwood in the St. Francisville area, utterly destroying the place, although Mr. and Mrs. Frank Percy and a guest in the house escaped without injury.

On the home front, things reached another incredible pitch. After having coffee-ed across the fence, I arose to go when mine hostess, glancing in the direction of the store, exclaimed she thought she recognized June. I reversed my steps from the front gallery to the back and vanished into the vegetation of the Yucca area.

When the clerk, a couple of hours later, passed this way to pick up a snort of port before we went on to dinner remarked that we were having Dan, June and three of their offspring to join us. And so they did. Sister was present, too, but she wasn't talking.

After dinner, Dan remarked that June had seen something about the Ghana garden and asked if I minded showing it to his family. I took them the short way through the gourd garden and we penetrated Ghana no further than I. S. Willard with camera had advanced when she "struck" the over all photo. That seemed to satisfy everyone and I strolled back to the house where I said Goodbye to June who seemed quite pleasant.

About 2 o'clock, Sister came over to see me, bubbling over with vituperation against everybody but mostly against Dan and June. According to Sister, --and I don't believe a word she says, June with children had driven up from Alexandria, intent on going to Hatchitoches to see her mama who lives there and to inspect Dan's house. On stopping off here, she had decided to phone Dan, telling him J. H. had suggested she remain for dinner and that she should come down. She, and the children had gone from the store to Celeste where, according to Sister, the children had taken the boxer into the bathroom and there



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was much trouble getting him out as he is never allowed in the house. Celeste had planned to attend a luncheon in town and J. H. would therefore eat at the big house but with five unannounced diners, he said he would eat at home and Celeste, having not planned luncheon, was distressed.

Then, according to Sister, before dinner, she had spoken to Dan when he arrived but, according to her, he had flattened her out, saying he had spoken to her last Friday when he had been here. Hence her refusal to speak to anyone at dinner which was all very clubby. Just before supper, Sister unburdened herself to me on the nasty brats that are Dan's and June's and J. H. coming along, gayly remarked he thought the three little girls were nice children, didn't Sister think so, and Sister did. According to Sister, Dan was furious with June for having come here and made her turn around and return to Alexandria without proceeding to Natchitoches and, by mid afternoon, Dan departed for where, she did not say.

Tomorrow Sister is scheduled to accept Blythe's invitation to visit her for a couple of days. There is some talk about Sister taking a trip to Washington and Canada but how that will pan out and when, I wouldn't know. And so "around and around she goes, and where" -- if ever -- she stops, nobody knows.

It is tiresome but it's a fact, -- get three Henrys together and you're guaranteed a dog fight which, come to think of it, does make it a little easier on the other animals.

Ghana continues yielding vegetables at a great rate, --okra, tomatoes, carrots, beets and even a third planting of radishes in its radishes, which are rather late in this hot climate where they usually play out after the full summer sun gets turned on. At the moment, however, the zinnias and cosmos are the most colorful things in the vegetable garden, what with triangles perhaps twenty five or thirty feet to a side simply glowing in marvellously brilliant colors. Perhaps that is what is attracting the peacocks who have been wandering there almost every morning for the past week. I must wander there myself right now by the light of the moon for I left a hose running and must avoid a flood.....

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N. --the miracle of the soul of the white butterfly occurred this afternoon at 2. I shall leave this envelope open to enclose the aforesaid "soul" at dawning.

Wednesday, August 3rd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid with a drizzle of several midday hours that netted precisely one tenth of an inch of rain or moisture. Great was my delight and surprise when an air mail winged its way in from Lyme today, indicating that the deep summer sojourn had been completed and a stack of stuff awaited attention at home base. I hold the thought no attempt will be made toward correspondence until after the "must stuff" has been rounded up in part, at least. It was impressive you should have mentioned Greenwood, -- in view of my reference to the place only a day or two back. I must knock off a column tonight and perhaps I shall have something to say regarding Greenwood in that column which should appear a week from tomorrow. Perhaps I shall entitle it: "Of Mansions and of Mules" or some such. I have not seen the article to which you refer but I suppose somebody may round up a copy for me. I'm glad you mentioned the Richard Pratts and if I do the column indicated above, they might be interested in receiving a copy and I shall save them one if it doesn't turn out too dull.

And may I thank you for enclosing the clipping concerning the proposed Uganda saint. I had not heard of this plan. I like to keep abreast with such doings and I'm always glad to bring them up for conversation pieces when one or another of the Reverend Fathers come by for a day of port and talk.

Sister got off for Blythe's about 7 this morning



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10661, 573 August, 1960

and great was the satisfaction all around that she and we should be having a breather. Over the coffee cups later in the morning, I learned from Celeste that J. H. is getting mighty tired of the whole business as the endurance test for everybody's nerves goes forward.

About 8 this morning, somebody who is to be Mr. Walker's secretary called to ask at what time today she might bring her mama, visiting her from Shreveport, for a tour. Lucky girl, --that the decks should have been cleared only an hour earlier. I recommended 9:30 and, ten minutes later, recommended the same hour for some Oklahoma people about whom the Louisiana motel telephoned. The Oklahoma people were very nice and very dumb and must have thought I had nothing to do in this world but give them a tour for which they manifested scant interest and expressed scant thanks although they did get some movie shots which was perhaps all they were after. As for the future Walker secretary, I liked her and her mama who had once attended a class at L. S. U. before which Lyle had appeared as lecturer. These people, however, surprised me by producing from the confines of their car a small child, perhaps a few months old and a little girl, perhaps 2 or 3. Trying to keep up with the little one and at the same time listen to my warbling was quite a strain on the grandmother who had to ask me to repeat many things over again after she had returned from tracking down the frisky little one. But it all came out even in the end since God arranged a drizzle that gave them all a good wetting down and as I was already steaming nicely, I found the drenching cooling at least.

I think I did not mention in yesterday's memo that although the Rocket was scheduled to appear on Tuesday to take some shots of the artist wandering about in Ghana garden, she did not appear. She didn't appear today, either, --which certainly was no surprise to me, --after all these years.

The note from James was informative but somewhat puzzling since I cannot imagine why I should be advised where I. S. Willard might be at any given time and why he should be writing me on the subject. Perhaps I. S. Willard asked him to inform me since I think she hoped to get an invitation for last Sunday which she certainly did not receive but that was because I did not attempt contacting her and, I gather,

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Thursday, August 4th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot. I laughed to myself today at the example coming to hand, showing how people don't read. Carmen called me just after noon. She said she had read the Cane River Memo about the peacock on the pond and had loved it. She said when she went home for lunch, her sister had asked her if she minded if she cut out the Memo and mailed it to a friend in Arkansas whom she knew would just love it. Now Carmen and her sister are both racial bigots and nobody needs to tell anybody about bigotry in Arkansas. Of course they didn't get the point of the Memo which was to show the stupidity of Emmet and Erwin about this color business and Carmen and sister, a couple of Emmets and Erwins themselves, lapped up the whole article and swallowed it hook, line and sinker and withal, with delight. Perhaps never, perhaps, however, one of these days, they are suddenly going to wake up with a start as jolting as the sensation Emmet receives when she discovers she has begotten a peacock.

Peace obtained here about today and it was wonderful. I suppose the lunacy will start in again along about tomorrow but we are all grateful to God for the couple days of respite.

A card party across the fence this afternoon suggested everything is rocking along satisfactory at the Hatchitoches hospital. How remarkable that Madam Regard's delicate constitution can survive all the rigors imposed upon it during the past 10 months.



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Over the coffee cups this morning, Celeste read me

a letter from Juanita A. who mentioned that she was back in Texas, following a two weeks vacation with Joe in Arkansas where they loved the Ozark country. She said they plan two weeks more of touring in other sections of Arkansas this month prior to the opening of her school term on the 1st of September. She says she plans to drive over here to meet Joe for a week end, leaving her car here during the Arkansas jaunt and then the two of them returning here so she may pick up her car and head her way back to Conroe. On advice from J. H. Celeste was not reporting, when making acknowledgement of the letter, that at least one other member of the family would be here. Under existing conditions, that set of week ends ought to be just dandy.

It was nice hearing again from Helen. I notice she now envisions including Lyville in her proposed Natchitoches trip, along with Mary. From where I sit, it appears to me that visit, into the Cape River country, at least, will not be taking place right away if they await their departure until they have received a beckoning signal from me. It is kind of her to invite me to Waco for a visit but, off hand, I can think of nothing more unlikely.

I worked rather late in the Ghana garden tonight, what with the moon being so pretty and the black grandpa on a frolf, supposedly assisting me in pulling weeds, I suppose. He didn't know it but he really did enhance my pleasure for he kept leaning heavily against the sweet basil plants, his tail straight up in the air and evoking the loudest minty fragrance from the dewy leaves of the bushes.

On our way back, I paused on the Yucca front gallery to inhale the tremendous perfume of a butterfly litly which I did not see in the shadows of the great banana leaves over head but I shall find it readily enough in the morning and enclose it herewith.....

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Friday, August 5th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot.

I'm just back from a pleasant, relaxed hour in the Ghana garden and the hour is 9:30.

The moon, traveling low these days along the southern horizon, was golden and put a sheen of silver on the great banana leaves and gave the same pleasant fusion to parterres that a mirror does to any pleasant scene. Grandpa whom I found stretched out in the moonlight beneath the African Houseroot but nevertheless in the moonlight, what with the moon, being near the horizon, casting its light sideways rather than from above. Grandpa be-stirred himself and by the time I had reached a bench at the far end of Ghana, proceeded to mark himself beside me and manifest considerable interest in the glass of crushed ice and coke I was carrying. It was all so peaceful and so pleasant that for a moment I forgot I had noticed lights in the big house, indicating that the mid-week traveler to Alexandria must have returned.

Back home, the Yucca gallery was heavy-heavy with the perfume of the butterfly lilies, several clusters of which unfolded late this afternoon. What with dew forming on them, they shimmered in the moonlight like great snow balls atop dark green stalks and I thought of Lyme and how pleasant it all was.

Last night, after folding up my beard, I proceeded to learn a little about geography. The air waves were cluttered up with trash but, fortunately, I stumbled on to a Nashville station that was broadcasting the election returns of the Tennessee primaries for Senator and I liked everything I had to hear. The instruction in geography was leisurely which made it easier for me to grasp the lesson. There was much talk about the winner and the unlikelihood that he would carry Shelby country in view of Shelby's proximity to Arkansas and the Senator's known liberal



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policies. From this I assumed, and correctly so, as it turned out, that Shelby county must be on the Mississippi, since Arkansas is just across the river, and then, a little later, I learned that Shelby country did come through for the winner as even did its chief city, Memphis. And that settled that. Davidson county was equally unknown to me as a geographic unit but I discovered eventually that Nashville is its main urban center. I didn't know it before, but wasn't surprised when I learned that the capitol or county seat of Knox county is Knoxville. It turned out that Chattanooga is in Hamilton county, should anyone inquire. And this reminds me to ask if I ever mentioned the letter somebody sent from France in the 1930's to somebody who had moved to Tennessee and that the letter was delivered, the name of the city being spelled out "Chateau Houga". That strikes me as easier for the postman than the letters Sir Walter Scott used to write from Abbotsford to his cousin in America, addressing them to  
A. Chinn, Esquire, 11. . . .  
Gail Dukey, . . . .  
U. S. A. . . . .  
Sir Walter never could remember the world, Kentucky.

Along about first dark this evening, although, in truth, sunset fused into moonrise so swiftly one never really noticed the transition, my telephone rang. I responded and the artist surprisingly said:  
"If you're planning to come down this way, I done got some money so you could pass a round to the saloon and get something . . . . ."  
I cleared my throat and asked: "How you feelin'", and she gasped, "Lordy, Lord, I thought I was ringin' Pa and didn't notice that anybody but him would be answerin'!"  
From this I conclude there must be moonlight and moonshine at the artist's house tonight . . . . .

10666

10666

Sunday, August 7th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and dry.

Just after I had folded up Friday night's memo, I. S. Willard called. She had seen the Registers a couple of times during the week. She said they both seemed remarkably gay in view of all their prolonged session in the hip section and that they seem to enjoy reading together and that Kay is able to get around on crutches. That they should be cheerful seems to indicate they have great strength and courage for Kay's hip isn't doing well. Her doctor says some blood vessels haven't been giving the hip the proper nourishment and that, instead of healing, the hip bone has deteriorated, requiring another operation that will put her in a cast for six months. Her doctor, in whom Kay has great faith, is taking a vacation of two weeks, during which Kay will board a plane with a nurse and journey to the Bluff for a visit. Her doctor recommends that she have Charleston physicians examine her hip while she is there and possibly a trip to Johns Hopkins might be in order. Assuming she returns to Baton Rouge, however, within two weeks, the operation will be performed there and then she will go into her cast. In view of all this, it does seem extraordinary I. S. Willard should have found them so much on the gay side.

On the home front, early morning sailing was a little rougher than before. About 7:15 in the evening, however, it was quite a different tune when la bag knocked at my door, and with much flood of tears, related that J. H. had told her she had been unkind to me and that an apology was in order, etc., etc. Sunday morning I was again honored by a visit with much protestations of love, etc., etc., -- as falsely lovin' as hateful the day before. Ora had called Saturday morning to ask if she might come down with a view to making some note for an article but I responded negatively. She said she would try again on Wednesday.  
It seems, as I learned on Saturday night, following the tears, that Blythe had taken Sister to Briarwood on Thursday and that they found Carrie just fine and declaring she had been busy of late, doing some picture for the Leutcher-Starks. That certainly was an unexpected bit of news, leading one to believe that Briarwood and Orange must have patched up their . . . . .



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differences. She sent word to me that she owed me to letters and that she would be getting around to answer before long. I wish she wouldn't write me but rather to Pat and Juanita B.

I was amused tonight, just after supper across the fence, when J. H. answered the phone, taking a message for me. It was from Mat Hertzog, saying he would like to come up to see about getting some dipper gourds. He came and he got a flock of gourds. He seemed to be impressed by the crop hanging from the trellises and asked me if he could get seeds from me to make a garden of gourds for Magnolia. I told him I would give him a ton of seeds and he finally departed, looking slap happy about the whole thing, and not at all in the spirit of the "Dear Sir" letter.

I haven't been able to find E. R. Murrow but perhaps he isn't doing the daily news cast. I did hear CBS recommend to its listeners the Murrow program on Sunday but they never mentioned the hour and I never did catch it with it. It seemed to me it was called something like "Background to the News" or some such.

Tonight I did hear an excellent hour interview with Walter Lippman by Howard K. Smith. That Lippman should have declared himself an admirer of Mr. Churchill surprised me not at all but I was mildly surprised to hear him mention the President of France as one of his pet heroes, too.

On Saturday night I caught up with a portion of Invitation to Learning. The good soldier by Ford Madox Ford. I had forgotten that F. M. F.'s papa was a German, named Heuter or some such and was prominent in London musical circles at the turn of the century. There wasn't much about the good soldier that recommended itself to me, apparently being a prosaic novel about an American and an English couple and their romances during the pre-1914 years. I enjoyed everything I heard on the program but, for the first time in I know not how long, found myself surprised that it seemed to be lasting so long, for, as you know, the half hour usually runs out, seemingly, before it gets started. And now I must fold, hoping it may have been nice to you in Lyme.....

10668

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Monday, August 8th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot.

Over the coffee cups this morning, I learned of one point for the autumnal season that seems to be settled. Celste said that yesterday, while driving in to town with her, J. H. said that Dan, of all people, had said that he thought that since Sister is here, Melrose should not be put on this year's Pilgrimage.

And so that, I take it, is that.

Among other things I must attend to forthwith is to advise my several hostesses so that they may accept invitations to serve at other homes.

It goes without saying that in the considerable mail today, the letter that really mattered was the Friday one from Lyme. It was so noble of little Miss Lee to take time out in such a hurly-burly schedule.

I shall be concerned until I am re-assured about the unpleasant itching that developed on the heels of the trip. I hold the thought it may be no more than some surface irritation that can readily be corrected. I have forgotten if red bugs operate as far North as the Mason-Dixon Line but I suppose they do. I remember in 1938 I picked up some around my ankles during the summer holiday in the triangle formed by New York, Florida and Louisiana and that after my return to Manhattan, they lingered with me until well into January of the following year. At the time, I didn't know much about them, save from their unpleasantness but now I handled them with dispatch, usually by applying a day of alcohol or vaseline. The latter seals off air from them and they fold up pretty quick, --in a matter of minutes or perhaps less. I wonder now that I put up with them for five or six months in earlier times. Whatever the present affliction may stem from, I hold the thought it may be eradicated in a jiffy and that everything may be back to normalcy without waiting months to reach that desirable condition.



10669

88801

I kangarooed through much of the mail today which was bulky but of no particular interest as compared with the interesting particulars from little Miss Lee. I want to read again what you had to say about the recording of Proust's *Within The Budding Grove*, --a statement that nearly jolted me out of my chair. I think it must have been your persistency that finally got this third volume into production. Frankly, from all the opposition we have encountered during the past years, I never thought we would get another volume from the "A La Recherche du Temps Perdu" series. It has been so long since I read "A l'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleur" that I cannot remember much about it but it seems to me it was not one of my pet volumes, being too long and drawn out in little Marcel's mooning over Albertine, but, come to think of it, he moons endlessly in all the volumes on that subject, and especially in "Albertine Disparue". But now, after more than a quarter of a century, I shall be curious to dip into the pages again and see how it unravels. I am forever getting the French and the English titles mixed up for, as I recall, there are only 4 or 5 volumes in English and about 16 in French, and I reckon the next after the volume about the "Budding Grove" comes *Cote des Guermentes*.

A long, hand-written letter from Kay, together with several enclosures, apparently letters from somebody to her, covers about the same ground I. S. Willard did in her report except for the statement that Kay and James would be going to New Orleans to consult with her doctor there. From this, I gather the Charleston jaunt may not be in the cards but that is only a guess on my part.

A note from Mrs. Charles Baldridge says she has done a Ghana story and passed it along to the *Baton Rouge Sunday Morning Advocate*, just before she started for a vacation in the Ozarks. She didn't say when the story would appear but we shall learn that from James when it does.

I shall be delighted to learn how "Bye, Bye, Bridie" turned out and don't forget a report on the health situation.....

10670

88801

Tuesday, August 9th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot. Like mother, like son, as the old saying has it. I was reminded of the adage at supper tonight when J. H. asked me if I would like some more peacocks, explaining that he had learned of an opportunity to buy some young ones inexpensively somewhere in south Louisiana and that they would be delivered here one day early in the week. Earlier this week I had had some work done, tightening up the Unicorn house, and since the unicorn isn't here at the moment, I think this will make a fine place for the youngsters until they are old enough to join Dot and Dash nightly atop the giant pecan tree.

I was in the gardens most of the day but dropped this way around 2:30 for a drink of ice water and received three phone calls in rapid succession. The first came from young Edgar Rogier, overseer of Little Eva. He said the Cloutierville Baptist Church is having revival services and wanted me to know they would be glad to have me as their guest. He added, and this was the point of the call, that the evangelist had asked if he might confer with me early one day this week. It turned out that the evangelist thinks 8 a.m. early and I shall see him on Friday. I believe he hails from someplace in Mississippi and is just the type I should enjoy asking some questions about religion as practiced in that State.

As I replaced the receiver, the instrument rang again and it was Carmen, asking me if I could tell her



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the acreage of Little Eva. I told her I thought it to be about eight thousand acres but asked her why she didn't call me five minutes earlier so that I might ask Edgar.. She had a questionnaire from the Texas and Pacific Railroad about Little Eva and another question requested enlightenment on another point, to wit, Was Chopin, the railroad stop on Little Eva, named after the French composer by that name. I told her I never heard of such a person, the only composer bearing that name I ever heard of hailed from Poland, which took her quite aback, as she exclaimed:

"Well, I declare, you're perfectly right but I hadn't thought about it before."

Again I replaced the receiver and again the bell rang. --Ola Mae, no less, calling from Shreveport. She reported that Mr. Hodges had called on her this morning, suggested the issuing of a weekly paper to serve the El Camino Real area and had asked her to contact me to see if I would consider contributing. I said I would consider the matter in conference either with her or Mr. Hodges. She said she would try to get down Saturday. I suggested Sunday might be better. She wasn't sure which Saturday or Sunday. I said I had expected to see Carolyn a week ago today. She said she had flown down to some place on the Gulf. That's alright with me.

While I was busy directing garden operations this morning, some Colonel James arrived unannounced. He must have been here before as he brought me a bottle of wine and a loaf of French bread. He also brought his daughter, his wife, a youth from Maryland and probably his mother. I thought the Colonel ought or out of order when he responded to a knock on the door. It was Valley Electric people, engaged in re-wiring all circuits leading into the gardens and asking me to direct their workmen about what trees could be trimmed and which couldn't. It didn't take me long to get rid of the James party. I was glad to have the Valley Electric force to do their work, and to set a few extra poles at vantage points which I may use advantageously later.

Today was Country Club day and so J. H. dined at the big house, as he will until Saturday, what with the frolic at New Roads claiming his wife's presence, beginning at dawning on the morrow.

So things turn, --peacocks north to Cane River and social butterflies south to False River and it all comes out even, I reckon.....

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Wednesday, August 10th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot this morning, cool tonight, with an 8th of an inch rain this morning and another 8th of an inch this afternoon, to the tune of much hanging from on high that brought copious supplies of water only to places up and down the road, skipping us with but the dab already mentioned.

It was so nice finding a letter from Lyme in this morning's post and may I say how much I appreciate your kindness in setting me straight about the Congressional list which sounds just grand.

And may I say how much I appreciate your kindness in acquainting me with the latest Broadway hit. Because of your kindness in sharing your impressions of these presentations from time to time, I am able to keep abreast of points I would otherwise miss since I do not read Time or whatever magazines give them space.

I am so glad the patient appears on the mend. I'm forever wondering if it will ever be January and even if it does roll round, if the patient's status will be altered any. Somehow I have a feeling the urge to look after the parent doesn't move the offspring too mightily.

Ora called at 8 this morning and said she would be down this way a little after 9.

At 9, Mildred Cunningham's husband, Peyton, phoned to ask me a favor. He was drawing up a brief with a view to defending a client in court. Although the man is white, there is a bit of color pertaining to the matter in question and Peyton requested my assistance so far as advising him on certain points are concerned and, of course, I was glad to do so. Peyton's client is a white man who was formerly on the college payroll as a guardian of the campus, or rather one of the guardians of the somewhat vast and



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sprawling acreage, --practically a city within itself. The man operated a photo shop in town, catering mostly to people of color. Lester Hughes rented the man the property. Somebody accused the man of operating an indiscreet rendezvous joint and the college fired him. The case was heard in Court about the photographic business and the man was acquitted. Then somebody complained that colored people shouldn't be congregating in the section of the town where the man's shop is. The man, as I understand it, is trying to restrain the city from doing away with the custom of plantation folks meeting friends in that area. It will be a pleasure to go to work on this brief which I shall pass along for Peyton's use. I shall take the opportunity to broaden the scope of places for people to congregate, -- poor men's clubs, as it were, with at least the ordinary conveniences so readily for the use of non-colored people.

At 10 Ora called to say she couldn't make it, as she had had to stop at the hospital for an x-ray of an ankle, injured when a grandchild tipped over on iron chair. I told her I didn't mind her being late if she cared to come and she did or she did. It rained just after she got here but ceased before she departed. I outlined a few ideas for her as an approach and treatment of an article for a magazine she is going to attempt. I also told her that Carmen had called to gossip this morning and that I had taken the opportunity to advise her I thought it would be an excellent move if the Hysterical Ladies would issue a statement, pointing out that inasmuch as the Civil War Centennial Commission, which has been preparing for the 1961 observations for several years, and since the Hysterical Ladies would like to cooperate to the fullest in this national undertaking, the Hysterical Ladies, requiring time to add extra plantations and pagentry to make the 1961 Pilgrimage a unique success, it had accordingly been decided that the 1960 and 1961 Pilgrimages would be merged into a single event, to be celebrated in 1961. Thus presented on the positive side, it would seemingly explain the omission of the 1960 Pilgrimage and give the group an opportunity to round up Reform, Agnolia, etc., and at the same time avoid disappointing 1960 pilgrims who would be disappointed if only Beaufort and Oakland were on the agenda. Well, we shall see.....

10674

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Thursday, August 11th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Humid, cloudy and reasonably cool in the mid 80's. We almost got a sprinkle toward evening but not quite.

The phone was out of order from 4 or 5 last night until 9 this morning when it was half in order, in that one could receive signals from the bell when being dialed but the person calling couldn't understand anything one said.

Later this afternoon, the instrument died again, and tonight I believe its demise due to someone having left the receiver off which suits me to a T. I may be missing some i-coming calls but I'm not being interrupted and I, for my part, am interrupting no one.

Today's post brought the enclosure from Henry Clay Watson which sounds like quite a different tune from his last. What museum he has in mind doing up this way, I know not and I certainly don't care.

Today was Blythe's birthday and she had a party at the camp, inviting a flock of ladies from Alexandria and Sister but as the invitation wasn't delivered until mid afternoon and as Sister was back by 4:30, I take it the call for her presence at the camp was either intentionally late or, perhaps, there may have been no invitation but merely a crash.

Before I forget it, I want to refer to your mention of Dr. Tom Dooley's "The Night They Burned the Mountain". I recall having read some excerpts from it in a Readers Digest sometime in the Spring and got the notion it must be an excellent item. Last winter Station KMOX, St. Louis, which comes in strongly here, ran a series of broadcast by Dr. Dooley which were, I suppose, taped in Asia and forwarded to this country for broadcasts. Through them I seemed to get



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Thursday, August 11th, 1960.

to know the author before I knew his work.

As for Parish news, I hadn't learned until this week's paper arrived, carrying the announcement, that Pat had been named Assistant District Attorney for Natchitoches and Red River Parishes. As Lester's post runs out at the end of the year, the Assistant's post will also probably do likewise. This job was created by the Legislature and it is nice that Pat has the distinction of having been the first to fill it.

At dawning this morning I was entranced when six field hands, strong of back and sinewy of arm appeared on my gallery. J. H. having sent them to me for garden duty since he felt it was too damp in the orchards or fields or whenever. I never turn back any although sometimes it's a bother to try to find something at which they can labor when I am not with them that will not end up in hardship on the plants. But I got them going nicely and then went on to breakfast. On my return to the seat of operations, I was as surprised as I had been at dawning for during my round with bacon and eggs and hot chocolate, J. H. had changed his mind about the moisture content of the universe and all my hefty helpers had vanished from the gardens, and, secretly, I was glad. Three re-appeared this afternoon, however, and they remained until close of day and much was accomplished.

I intended mentioning on Monday or Tuesday that Celeste had read me a letter from Ida Mazurette with whom she seems to correspond on occasion. Among other things, Ida remarked that Edna Golsen or some such name had mentioned that the Registers were coming to New Orleans for Ray's operation and Ida wondered if I wanted her to do anything on my behalf. I think the inquiry a bit odd but kind, of course, but I will not need Ida's assistance in any Register matter. I have given up writing the Mazurettes since I never hear from them direct although Celeste frequently draws a long letter. And so runs out Thursday and so I must get busy and do some work.....

10676

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Friday, August 12th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Veils of thin clouds and wonderfully humid.

I was entranced today when I learned the difficulties so mysteriously acquired during the outing had found a soothing ointment and I hold the thought the irritation by now is all a thing of the past.

I am puzzled, even as you, in trying to figure out how the ivy section could have got into the picture. I suppose the beach must be ruled out for usually the sun takes care of everything in that quarter. Probably we shall never know but it would be interesting to find out.

I am so appreciative of your kindness in giving me such a grand description of your travels. No, I have never visited White Sulphur but have it on my list as a "must". I shall have to consult a Federal Guide one day on the place. As I recall, it flourished in ante bellum times, even as did Saratoga, but somehow, perhaps in part because of its situation which is more remote, it seems to have retained more of its earlier aspects than did the New York State watering place which was also a popular resort more than a hundred years ago. It has been so very long ago that I read Action at Aquila but it seems to me one episode in that book was unfolded there.

The night that turned into a nightmare sounds terrific and I'm sorry you had to go through that suffocation of fresh paint inside and old Brenda outside. One would have been too much and the combination impossible.

I'm glad you mentioned the absence of TV and radio along your trip at the pleasantest spot where the mountains seemed to keep out communication with the outside world. I had never thought much about problems the highlands might present for those who would make use of these media to keep in touch with the outside world. I'm thinking especially of some such place as Gatlingburg which is certainly hedged in all around by towering mountains and I'm wondering if telephone wires to stations in the valley provide what otherwise would be impossible to get. Madam Beaufort will be back from the Tennessee watering place one of these days and I must inquire about ether wave communications up that way.



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As I turned the page, to my surprise, the telephone which hasn't been operating rang. I didn't know the identity of the speaker, a lady, but the voice was pleasant. She said she had been in Floriday for a while, --and I thought of I. S. Willard whose voice, also pleasant, wasn't that of the speaker. We did weather, planting, etc., and then she asked if I had heard she was currently serving as R. B. Williams secretary. Then I realized the speaker must be Mrs. Richardson of Reform plantation.

Then I wondered, naturally, what she wanted, and it turned out that she had a friend, a Mrs. Brower, visiting her from Fort Meyer and, of course, the guest must see Melrose. The hour agreed upon was 2 p.m. on the Sabbath.

I got a doorstep surprise this morning at dawning when I went to step out on the front gallery to see if Pot and Dash had made up their minds. Sometime last evening, probably about 6:30, somebody had placed half of a huge watermelon, sliced the long way, just inside the screen door. The other door was open, and I suppose I must have been in the Ghana garden. Be that as it may, I returned here, --I don't recall by which side of the house but I assume by the white garden side, probably took a bath and then sat down to do some desk work. When it came time to get the 10 o'clock news, I closed the boudoir door giving on the front gallery. I suppose it may have encountered, --must have, indeed, encountered the watermelon, pushing it slap up against the screen door but with the humidity so high these days, doors are forever sticking and I suppose I simply gave the thing an extra push and that was that.

It goes without saying that the watermelon, already ripe to the point of falling apart, had oozed out gobs of juice on the door sill and what by way of insects it had attracted, I know not, for I simply wrapped the thing up in newspapers and disposed of it and then mopped up the leavings. Such a strange way to dispose of a watermelon.

Tonight, before turning on my radio, closing my door so the sound may not seep to other houses, I shall probably look in vain for another melon.....

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Sunday, August 14th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and humid with half an inch of rain yesterday and another half inch this noon at dinner time.

Blythe, Joan and Miriam came up to the camp on Saturday afternoon about 2. Sister learned they had passed the store and she immediately hot-footed it for the camp. At supper, J. H. said Zelma had 'phoned to say Sister would be back here for supper and to save her a plate. When she had announced her plans, Blythe asked Zelma to 'phone the store, --my 'phone being out of order, inviting me over to the camp for seven o'clock supper. As Sister did not return here, I did not mosey over to the camp.

This morning she 'blew' in here, saying something awful had happened but she couldn't tell me what it was. She was going to church in town and asked me to look after some details as to bouquets and things in the big house. At noon dinner, J. H. said Sister had had a telephone call at 6 o'clock in the morning and that she was leaving town this noon at one o'clock and he was driving to Shreveport in his car behind hers. There was something about John Wenk having moved a bed out of the Shreveport residence which constituted the "awful", as referred to earlier.

Frankly, for a man who had had a cardiogram on Friday, it seems to me J. H. must have had quite an unrestful day but he got back at 7 and Sister remained in Shreveport with her lawyer friend, Grace Williams.

I had expected Ola Mae during the afternoon but wasn't surprised when she didn't show up. I had discounted this probability when I had accepted Mrs. Richardson's request to drop in and she came at 2, bringing with her her Florida friend, plus three young ladies who were the extras one must always expect when ask if a friend may be brought to view the place. But it was all very pleasant and they were gone before 4 o'clock when Blythe and her two companions arrived. Blythe said that when it became evident Sister wasn't leaving the camp on Saturday night, Blythe didn't expect me. After it began getting a little late and Sister manifested no



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to spend the night with them at the camp since it was getting bedtime. But Sister didn't want to go to bed and so remained at the camp until four in the morning. Sister had told her with some glee that Melrose wouldn't be on the Pilgrimage this year. I suppose it is too much to assume that such a disordered mind could realize that the advertising Melrose gets as a result of the Pilgrimage enhanced the value of the property of which ~~is~~ she is part owner. One thing I realize is that Celeste and I will be saved a tremendous amount of labor that is always involved in preparing for Pilgrimage. I hope I can persuade the Hysterical Ladies to put off Pilgrimage this year. If there should be one, however, I shudder at the thought of the numbers of people who will be trying to crash the Melrose gate regardless.

Well, I realize it must be might tiresome reading all this trivia. I pass it along, however, thinking you will understand the better the future rigors as the unroll in the months ahead.

While Joan and Miriam rested on a bench behind the African House, Blythe and I did a round of the Ghana and the gourd gardens. A couple of weeks or so had elapsed since she had seen them and she was astonished at the quantities of gourds and the beauty of the corcomb. I suggested she mark quantities of gourds for her own use and gather corcomb to make bouquets to fit into the gourds when the proper season has arrived.

I welcomed the quiet of Saturday evening to do a dab of reading, --I seem to have done so little of late. I digested a Readers Digest of several months back and dipped into the autobiography of Thomas Jefferson with a Forward by Dumas Malone which I thoroughly enjoyed. I hold the thought there may have been a moment or two for relaxation and reading at Lyme over this week end, too.....

19680

Monday, August 15th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and steamy. J. H.'s day got started a little after 5 o'clock this morning when he had a telephone from Shreveport. Dr. Wenk was calling to apologize for having 'phoned yesterday morning so early, -- at 6 o'clock. The clerk tells me that J. H. wrote Sister's lawyer, -- Whitfield Jack, that he was disgusted with parties in the impending divorce and was washing his hands of the whole business. That determination will last just long enough to give Sister a chance to start screaming and he will, as usual, go a jumpin'.

According to Celeste, Dr. Went bought a house for himself and the children and, for what reason, if any, I know not. Celeste had all the mattresses and springs removed from the family mansion and placed in the new house. If this doesn't make any sense to you, it probably doesn't make any sense to anyone. The doctor's position is that while he realizes he has no right to remove anything from the mansion, not until a final settlement and division is made, several months hence, he has in mind to let Sister have the mansion which, among other things, of course, would rid himself of the trouble of finding a purchaser of same.

Well, so much for today's contribution of the joys of life. I add only that the peace obtaining here, thanks to her absence temporarily, passeth all understanding".

... I was happy to find myself sufficiently awake last night after quitting this desk to turn to my reading machine for a page before folding up the beard. I am



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enjoying the autobiography of T. Jefferson, "squire and although  
it pertains primarily to finer points in State papers, etc.,  
it is always Jeffersonian and delightful. I found  
it interesting, for instance, that in 1781 when  
Jefferson had expected to go to France as commissioner,  
he waited a month in Philadelphia because  
the boat on which he was to sail was frozen stationary in ice in  
Baltimore and that he finally went to Baltimore and  
waited another month for the boat to get free but before  
a thaw had set in, plans were changed and Jefferson  
returned to Monticello. It has been  
a long time since I lived on the Eastern seaboard but, try  
as I may, I cannot recall a winter when I did dwell in  
that region that the winters were so severe that ice would have  
clogged and made shipping impossible in the  
Baltimore area. Perhaps the winter of 1781 in Maryland was like that of France  
in 1788, --the coldest anyone ever knew, --before or since.  
Tomorrow is the day Charles Cunningham is to be married in La.  
No invitations were issued and nobody is supposed to be present  
except the bride, groom and their two friends, Mr. and  
Mrs. Grace of Baton Rouge and the clergy. In view  
of this fact, it does seem strange, I must say, that  
Charles has taken the best Hatchitoches photographer  
with him to record the day on film. As Lafayette  
is a much larger city than Hatchitoches and  
has many more photographers, it does seem odd that  
Mr. Gillette should have been taken from town, especially as  
no one is to be present but the five indicated above.  
In the old days, aside from the bride's kin, it was  
the best man who accompanied the groom but today the  
best man has metamorphosed into a camera. Smile.....

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Tuesday, August 16th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and sunny until 4:30 when clouds rolled up  
mightily, danged a little, spilled out a shower that  
dampened and cooled me and it continues sprinkling although not  
enough to mean much.  
Robina, in her letter, speaks of a  
radio program, Country Editor, which used some of last week's  
Cane River Memo. This appears to be a morning program  
and I did not hear it because I never do any radio-ing  
except at 12:30 noon and at night.  
And speaking of radio reminds me that several times  
at night during the past few days, I have chanced  
on a San Antonio station that has stated at the time that  
the balloon, currently encircling  
the globe every hour and a half or so, may be seen from the  
Texas-Louisiana area but a veil of clouds has  
happened to be covering the heavens each time at this bend  
of the river and so I know not if it could be readily  
seen or not. I haven't heard anyone  
mention having caught sight of it but I must  
inquire about that point.  
Understand it, the balloon shines with a brilliance equal to  
a major star and so ought to be readily glimpsed, I  
should think, especially as it must be traveling  
in a west to east direction with sufficient speed to  
make it noticeable. I find the whole scientific  
business miraculous and how one bounces messages  
back and forth from the earth, I haven't the  
slightest notion. Perhaps I mentioned  
that a week ago Bobby Deblieux dropped in to see me and  
mentioned that a British TV program some time back  
picked up a map of Fort Worth that had been put on  
the air two or three years ago, the station broadcasting it,  
having long since been demolished, suggesting the thing  
had bounced back after a couple of years of travel in  
the universe which I also do not understand.



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A telephone call between this paragraph and the above, advising me from town that the satellite is moving southward and can be seen plainly enough in town. I stepped out on the galley but clouds still obscure the heavens and so I'm glad to accept the word from quarters that are clear.

The clerk tells me J. H. had a card from Sister, penned in a sarcastic vein, thanking him and Dan for letting her stay a few days in the big house by herself but pointing out that her girl friend, Grace Williams, has lots of room for her in her house in Shreveport which she is glad to share with her. I hope this means she is going to stay with Gracie but, of course, one never knows how the mind of a psychopathic will turn from split second to split second.

Gracie is a granddaughter of Miss Lieudivine's Episcopal minister in South Louisiana. I believe Grace was one of three children in her family, besides herself there being twin boys. Gracie's papa killed one of the boys and himself thirty years ago or more. Assuming one inherits unstable mind, it would seem as though Gracie might be especially endowed mentally and emotionally to find a kindred spirit in Sister.

I got around to read a little more from the Jefferson autobiography last night, --the section having to do mostly with his service in France. It is far too sketchy for one who would like to have endless details although I was glad to refresh my mind about the circumstances of the printing of his Notes On Virginia, first in a miserable French translation in Paris and then in English by a London printer.

The autobiography was written in 1821, 30 years after the French Revolution broke out. Jefferson mentions the excessive expenditures of the Queen. I believe History has concluded that in reality, the Antoinette expenditures were actually of no consequence, financially, although her influence in getting a flock of Polignacs on the Civil List must have been important. Surely the little farm wasn't expensive and her purchase of St. Cloud not too staggering. Still, it is interesting to notice the lady included in the American

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Wednesday August 17th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Sunny and humid until 5 when clouds piled up and dumped more water on the Bermuda area without giving us a drop. I don't recall if I mentioned that during the recent dry spell, some of the planters in the Bermuda area finally rented some equipment and flooded their fields with water from Cane River. Just as the job was done and the fields wonderfully afloat, the rains came and almost daily from that day until this, that area has been getting tremendous rains to the point that the planters are now faced with the prospect of seeing their cotton drown utterly.

Today is birthday time for the Walker boy, -- Kenneth, junior, who is 10 or 11, and for his grandmother, Clara Genung, who is 75. I don't recall having encountered a grandmother and grandchild with birthdays on the same date.

I read a little more from the Jefferson autobiography last night, impressed by the fact that it contains so little about Mr. Jefferson but so many details about matters in which he was a witness. One thing I like is his enumeration of the towns he visits when making his European journeys even though he doesn't have anything to say about the places.

I believe it was in 1788 he made a hurried trip to The Hague to catch John Adams before the latter returned to the United States. Jefferson mentions all the places he passed through, both going and coming. The reader of this recorded version is House Jameson who is an excellent reader although his French is a bit novel on occasion so that I am not always quite certain as to the identity of some of the places he mentions although these appear to be in geographical progression as the journey goes along and that is a help. I assume Jefferson was living in Paris at the old house which I remember as being on the Champs Elysees 30 years ago. As he begins enumerating the places along his route in his quick jaunt to the Hague, it sounds as if Mr. Jameson begins with "Louvre", which seems odd and I wonder if he is really saying "Louvre", for the second place name is Mary, the third place Le Roi and so on. I interpret this to mean that Jefferson must have written Mary-le-Roi while in Paris.



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Jameson reads it as though it were not one but two places,  
Marly and le Roi. Further along in the autobiography, when speaking  
of spring and early summer and events taking place on the political front, he mentions the King,  
Queen, d'Artois and others being at Marly, -- making no  
identifying addition, for surely they were at  
Marly-le-Roi and not either at Porte Marly or Marly-la-Machine,  
both hard by.

On his return from Hollard to Paris, Jefferson traveled  
down the Rhine, stopping at many places and making little  
side excursions, as, to Heidelberg, for example, on his  
way to Strassburg. It would be interesting to run through  
the list of these towns together one day to re-capture in our  
minds some of the places, familiar to us, and undoubtedly retain  
by Jeffersons vividly enough since he was jotting these  
down in 1821, at least three decades after he had made the trip.

On the home front, it was wonderfully peaceful  
but there was a tremendous racket going on in  
Shreveport, it is said. J. H. and Celeste drove up early  
this morning and didn't get back until 6 tonight.  
The clerk and I ate across the fence because  
the cook at the big house, Doreatha, had to have the day  
off to go to Shreveport for a check-up, following her  
operation last spring. Tonight the clerk and I had a picnic  
supper of our own making at the big house since the cook wasn't  
back in time and since J. H. and Celeste were going  
back to town to sup at some sort of affair.

I am thankful they came back alone and that there may therefor  
be another day of peace hereabouts although I continue holding the  
thought that ister may remain in Shreveport. The boys are living  
with their father in the home he has purchased and the girl, on  
her return, perhaps this week or next, from Mexico, will also  
probably live with her father, as she has already ex-  
plained to Blythe that it is impossible for her to live with  
her mother. In the mean time, neither father nor mother are living in the mansion and nothing,  
according to law, is to be removed from it until  
a final settlement is made a year hence. And the General

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Thursday, August 18th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Sunny but humid until 4:30 when a drizzle  
brought the humidity to totality, and half an hour later  
the clouds thinned out but the dampness remained.

Peace this week is the great prize and I afforded myself  
no end of pleasure most of the day by working in the Ghana  
garden undisturbed.

The vegetables continue supplying both sides of  
the fence with plentiful supplies of okra, tomatoes, carrots,  
betéts, egg plant etc., while the corcomb increases the  
splashes of color in the triangles of every parterre. The  
tomatoes this year seem to be exceptionally fine and all  
three varieties have done equally well. The conventional  
large size about the circumference of one's fist are  
colorful enough on the vines. Two other sizes are equally  
delectable to my taste, one type about the size of  
a golf ball and less round than in the shape of a great big  
strawberry. These seem to have no seeds and none of the  
divisions within that characterize the larger type.

The smallest type is about the size of a quarter in circumference  
and are shaped just like the largest variety. I keep a tray  
of them in the ice box, referring to them frequently  
when night comes on, desk work is finished and the  
reading hour arrives.

I am preparing borders of the parterres for the  
autumnal garden and shall do some planting within  
another week or so, -- turnips, radishes, mustard and such like  
while the corcomb goes on expanding and looking  
more colorful from day to day.

The dampness continues letting down more gourds nightly  
but the vines, in coming apart, always leave a nice long  
stem, making it easy to suspend the gourds from the rafters of  
Yucca, giving the gallery a gaiety that seems to  
entrance everyone, -- their yellows and greens are so  
refreshing and their assortment of shapes so decorative.



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Dot and Dash remained in bed until after 8 this morning and disdained any breakfast. They spent most of their day following me about in the garden but didn't seem interested in looking for any bugs, none of which they would have found anyway, I guess, since the cotton dusting and spraying seem to have just about eliminated all insects. It seems odd that peacocks never peck at tomatoes, -- a food item which Emmet and Erwin adore, and unlike the guineas which are forever scratching up the ground, the peacocks never seem to practice that art of stirring up half concealed food. Dogs, chickens and guineas are things one can have if one doesn't want a flower or vegetable garden but one has to make up his mind about which he prefers. In the case of the peacocks, however, since they never scratch things up or eat raw vegetables, one can have both birds and garden without any danger of the birds playing hob with the garden.

Robert Rue, mother of Johnny Rue, Frances Rue Henry, etc., is sitting in at the RedCross while Carmen is taking the week off. I was reminded of the surprising lifting of gourds by John Rue last autumn today when Mrs. Rue called for a little chat, asked me how my gourds were doing and said that Johnny had a wonderful assortment of same at his camp, somewhere on CaneRiver. Mrs. Rue said she didn't know where Johnny got his seeds but his crop was doing wonderfully well and they must have been of stout stock. Smile.

It is heartening to find Kay's contemplation of her impending operations cheerful and I hold the thought that she may have smooth sailing straight ahead, following her August 29th ordeal.....

10688

10688

Friday, August 19th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and humid with a little sprinkle around 2 this afternoon.

The coffee hour was pleasant enough but I thought I detected a certain nervousness, manifested in various little ways, one of which astonished me because it was the first time the lady ever dared out a leaf from this side of the fence and I encountered her snipping ginger lily leaves along the path which she explained she feared might worry Madam General, should she pass that way tonight after the dew had formed.

Ten minutes of the coffee hour had been consumed when the phone rang. It was T. Sal Hertzog in town who had invited three people to luncheon and cards at her home in town and, as Celeste had already heard from another source, T. Sal was casting about for someone to take the place of the last minute withdrawal from the luncheon table and the card game. Celeste had been so fearful she wouldn't be asked, even though it was but a left handed gesture to fill in a role for which no substitute had been planned. But the important thing was that she really did get invited, -- "one has to be so careful about getting all the invitations one can at our age", it is said. Imagine.

And so off to town she flew and so J. H. dined with us at the big house which I always like. He fell to talking about the Governor's current problems with the New Orleans schools and from that to the case of Celeste's nephew, John Regard, whom Jimmy Davis appointed to head the Department of Archives, replacing Andressen. J. H. said that he had seen John a day or two ago and that John Regard had explained that one doesn't have to know anything to be the head of the State Archives. J. H. said he thought this was cheering news because the Governor had appointed a man with precisely that equipment. I said, casually, that I supposed the secretary of the Department head could help



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quite a lot. J. H. said he didn't know about that. I didn't ask if he had ever heard of a bag named Irma Tucker, currently holding down that job.

At 1, this afternoon a call from town announced the speaker to be Georgia Spinks, saying her folks were fishing on Black Lake and that she had thought to call me for a little chat. I asked her to come down immediately which she did and in the sprinkles, we walked over to Ghana where we talked for a couple of hours. I gave her a quick run down on the local situation so she would not be making plans to take in pilgrimage this year. She asked me to keep Crockett in mind, should I ever consider leaving the Cane River country which I thought very kind of her. She said she had recently had occasion to write A. J. Hodges about some horticultural matter and in responding he had spoken so warmly of me. Like the Lost Word and the Rocket, he, too, may have kindly feelings but he certainly doesn't waste much time voicing them on paper, even as they.

At 5:10, a couple of hours after the speaker had departed, Beaumack and Junior Fugabou appeared at Yucca bearing a crate in which four young peacocks were traveling. They are about the size of a grown rooster. I incarcerated them in the unicorn house and was pleased to see how tame they are.

Five minutes later, out of a clear sky, Joe Henry appeared at my door. He said Juanita would be arriving from Texas about 7, he arriving from Arkansas. At 5:30, we went over to supper and there met the General who had just arrived. His wife with Celeste was remaining across the fence. Joe scarcely speaks to the General which is dandy. J. H., the clerk, Joe, all three left supper before the General and I did, and he asked me if we might walk again in the Ghana garden. We did walk and he asked me about Sister, even as Joe did, and I was glad to stress the effect she produced on J. H.. The brother of the General's wife is ill in Shreveport, having had two thirds of his stomach and part of his liver removed and is expected to undergo a crisis on the morrow and they will journey up yonder bright and early. So runs the day and so I must get busy for a dab of desk work before calling it quits for the ending of the week.....

10690

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Sunday, August 21st, 1960.

Memorandum: no. 10690. The same weather pattern continues, -- hot, humid, patches of blue sky occasionally, intermittent drizzles to the tune of about a tenth of an inch. As the Weather Bureau remarks: "the same old widely scattered showers....."

First off, May I tell you how delighted I was to find the August Ladies Home Journal in Saturday's post. How characteristically kind of you and how delighted I am to see the Greenwood likeness and the Evergreen pictures, especially the interior of which the Pratts had written when they were hauling up rugs and furniture from New Orleans to get things ready for the camera last Spring.

I chanced to have an extra copy of "Of Mansions and of Mules", and since it touches on Greenwood, it occurs to me you might like to have it to attach to your copy of the Journal carrying the Greenwood likeness and I shall accordingly enclose it.

I was bidden to sup at the Rand camp last night and I accepted, -- just Blythe, Joan and Miriam. I found a statement Blythe made quite interesting, demonstrating as it seemed to do, how differently people read things. I mentioned how pleased I had been to see the pictures in the Journal. Blythe and Joan had seen them, too. Blythe said she had gone to school with Mathilda Gray and used to visit her at her home in Lake Charles, adding that so much time had gone by that she had forgotten how the place looked and accordingly was glad to see it and its interiors in the Ladies Home Journal. I said I hadn't had anyone to read the captions to me and had recognized only Greenwood and Evergreen. She said she didn't remember that Evergreen had appeared in the article and that, so far as she had seen, only Greenwood and Mathilda's Lake Charles home were illustrated in the Journal. Naturally, I let the matter drop right there, not bothering to point out that I, for one, at least, had seen nothing of the Lake Charles place. The fact that the article was about Mississippi River plantation homes somehow ought to have made her think twice about getting Lake Charles into the picture, I should have thought.

Juanita and Joe spent yesterday afternoon in town where they actually bought a lot on which they propose building a home, but when I know not. Celeste says in April.



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Juanita came to visit me for an hour this morning and read the article by I. S. Willard on the back page of the first section of Thursday's Enterprise. She said she and Joe were going in to town for mid day meal and so left around 10 to have coffee with Celeste who had told her Dorothy Cohen was dropping in, as she often does, following Church. About 11:30, I moseyed across the fence for dinner and saw a car in front of the house which I took to be Dorothy's. Joe and Juanita had obviously left. On entering I found Celeste and Dorothy chatting, Dorothy sitting in front of the window so that her face was in shadow. We chatted gayly for 10 or 15 minutes. I gathered Dorothy had just been in Shreveport since she began giving details about the Wenk ménage which seemed awfully intimate for one who doesn't know the Wenks too well. Suddenly it dawned on me that it was not Dorothy at all but Madam General. I automatically made a mental note of my own contributions to the conversation and was glad they seemed casual enough and so nobody ever knew how dumb I had been. Shortly afterward, J. H. and the General appeared coming from a conference in J. H.'s bedroom. I chatted a little with the General, who was enroute to Baton Rouge with his wife and they did not remain to break bread. The General says Sister is no better. Frankly that was no surprise. He said Dr. Wenk has purchased a 24 thousand dollar house and is having an outdoor swimming pool installed. Sister is staying in the mansion John Henry Wenk and Lloyd are with their father, and, as I understand it, the girl is back from Mexico and with her father, too. The General's brother-in-law has weathered his operation apparently, and is going to be alright if the absence of two-thirds of his stomach, a piece of his liver and something else he missing. The parting shot of the General and wife was directed at J. H.:—"Keep away from Shreveport", and she said but that's wasted breath on J. H. and he said she was right. Juanita and Joe are remaining here until the morrow when Juanita will go to Conroe and Joe to Arkansas. Today's drizzle was accompanied by high winds that seem to have knocked out the telephone although the electricity is still intact for which I am thankful. The young peacocks seem to be thriving but they will remain in the unicorn house for another week or so until they have increased their stature somewhat and can join the others nightly atop a pecane tree for they will never roost inside, once they are turned into the open air.....

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Monday, August 22nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Stearmy with showers to the amount of a half inch this morning and others during the afternoon to the same measure. It's clear tonight with the promise of widely scattered showers for tomorrow afternoon. The phone, after going out at noon yesterday, resumed operations late this afternoon. I didn't know it was functioning until nearly 5 o'clock when the artist called to say marauders were in the pear trees. A few minutes later, the Enterprise called to say that the State Department of Wild Life and Fisheries or some such was in a tizzy about the Cane River Memo of a couple of weeks back, --"Something Fishy". One never knows, or at least I'm no good at guessing as to what is going to appear without a ripple and what is going to bring things to the boiling point. Personally, I thought "Something Fishy" among the duller pieces had knocked off and was surprised when people took the trouble to phone their approval. I believe Cane River is under the aegis of the Conservation Department but perhaps Wild Life and Fisheries works with that Department. Be that as it may, Wild Life is getting wilder, it is said, because of the Memo and, of course, everybody is delighted that a mild flurry is astir in that quarter. I must confess I am astonished the Citizens Council hasn't been gunning for me long before this late date, what with the cracks I have taken about color but perhaps people like Cousin Emmet haven't time to read newspapers, what with all the energy they expend on trying to stir up racial animosities. Joe took off this morning at 7 for Arkansas, while Juanita A. lingered on until 11:30 before heading out for Texas. She coffee-ed across the fence and it began raining as the coffee was served. I lingered on a little longer than usual, awaiting a rift in the clouds and .....



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apparently mine hostess thought I was going to stay all morning since she asked me if I didn't want to join her and Juanita A. in running down to see Dee Hertzog but, naturally, I sent them on their way with my blessings. Celeste hadn't had an opportunity to talk much with Dee since the latter's return from an outing at Las Vegas on Saturday, what with the phone having been out of order. She did say, however, that Dee reported that there were much fewer people at Las Vegas this year than in former seasons. Why this should be so, I cannot imagine. I thought the size of the gambling crowd never varied much.

In spite of the afternoon drizzle, I picked okra enough for three houses, if all or any want gumbo. It seems to be true that the more okra is picked the more it produces and today's batch was greater than last Friday's and along about Thursday there will be a bountiful new supply for more go-rounds.

Along about first dark, I presided over a funeral, playing the triple role of grave-digger, mortician and preacher. One of the young peacocks simply died and that was that.

I was surprised to hear on a news cast that CBS is cutting out Amos and Andy and a whole flock of popular soap operas. It seems to me I remember Amos and Andy as having been on NBC at one time or another. Perhaps they are returning to that company or going on to ABC or whatever, but I am a little puzzled about such a scud of soap operas being discontinued by CBS, for I assume they must be quite a fixture for many daytime listeners. I shall be curious to see with what they replace them. I was mildly amused on Saturday night when someone on Invitation to Learning, discussing Eugene O'Neill's Strange Interlude, opined that soap operas seem to have taken much of their guidance from O'Neill which, I should imagine, would strike Mr. O'Neill with as much astonishment as it struck me.

And now for a dab of work and thence to my downy couch.....

10694

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Tuesday, August 23rd, 1960.

Memorandum: Continued muggy with an afternoon shower of nearly an inch. Tonight it's cloudless and the promise for the morrow is widely scattered showers.

The enclosures speak for themselves. It strikes me la Dormon speaks rather poorly for herself, declaring, as she does, that she has always loved Pat and cannot paint him a picture, having so many commissions already. She mentions \$150.00 as the price of her last two magnolia efforts. Pat and Juanita B. have a friend who paid Miss D. a hundred bucks and that's what they had envisioned doing. Of course, Carrie is playing hard to get but it seems to me such a game is in poor taste when it is being operated on one whom a person declares to have loved all his life.

In pursuance of Carrie's post script, I have written Kay, telling her that Carrie has penned me a line, telling that Kay Register is going to have an operation and that I ought to write her a chatty letter. I went on to explain that since Carrie didn't give me Kay Register's address, I should simply have to fall back on the same old one I used when writing her a couple of days back.

As for Carrie's expressed wish that we lived closer together so we might see each other more frequently, I made no reference in my response to her although I do long as she pleads for solitude and as I long for it, we probably would make excellent neighbors in that we should seldom be seeing each other.

As for Lucille's note, I thought it kind of her to invite me to Oakland for Pilgrimage. My response, eventually, will be in the negative, but I have already written her, saying I would give a definite answer within a few days. The truth is that I believe I had better "stay put" on the afternoons of October 15th, and 16th, for if I know my pilgrims, there will be about as many crashing the Melrose gate as might be expected, were we to be on the pilgrimage. On Saturday, I have no doubt, there



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may be ample supplies of Henrys to ward off intrusion bu  
on Sundays there are never any of them around after 12 noon,  
except, possibly, the Shreveport contingent, should she be  
here at the time. It would be so easy and so pleasant being  
at Oakland, chatting with people I should otherwise not  
meet but I think it would be nobler and wiser for me  
to remain at Yucca. Perhaps I shall end up with  
a compromise, -- going to Oakland on Saturday and not going on  
Sunday. One thing I am glad about and that is that  
Lucille asked me first which will give me an excellent  
alibi for going to Oakland, if I go anywhere, and most  
certainly not to Beaufort. After all, if it be true that  
Oakland seems to have gone to seed a little, it is  
at least pleasantly ante bellum whereas Beaufort, in  
contrast, has been so shellacked up and varnished to a  
shine that it exudes nothing of what it represents itself  
as being, good old Zelma, came to see me this morning.  
In July, she had come to me to see if I could do something  
about getting her some sort of a stipend out of the  
Welfare Department. Her appeal had been rejected when she  
had applied earlier in the month. I talked with Mrs. Coombs  
who is in the Welfare office but has to do with a different  
section than the one concerned with dependent widow-ladies.  
Mrs. Coombs told me that if the client was not  
satisfied with the decision of the local office, one  
might appeal to the main office in Baton Rouge but  
the appeal in Zelma's case would have to be made  
on or before August 8th. I made a mental note  
of the date and on the morning of the 8th, asked Zelma if  
she had filed her appeal. She was "down with my legs", meaning  
her rheumatism had put her under the lady doctor's care,  
and so I told her I would write the letter for her and put  
it in that day's post, signing her name in type only.  
Today she came by to see me to say she had heard from the  
local office, -- Hatchitoches, -- and that they told her  
she shouldn't have written to Baton Rouge and asked her who  
had written the letter for her. She told them she didn't  
know. They said it must have been some of the Henrys. She said  
she was sick at the time. What the local office didn't like  
was that the appeal had gone direct to Baton Rouge so they couldn't  
reject it in Hatchitoches without a doctor's certificate  
saying the applicant is alright which they will not get from the  
lady doctor. And so things turn and so I shall return  
for more chatter 24 hours hence.....

10696

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Wednesday, August 24th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Sticky, with sunshine during the morning, a half inch  
of rain in mid afternoon, followed by a sunset with sunshine and  
clear tonight with a promise for widely scattered showers on  
the morrow.

Ola Mae 'phoned from Shreveport, asking if she might  
see me at 2:30 this afternoon. She might but I doubted  
if she would be on time.

I had an opportunity to get the house cleaned up a bit this  
afternoon and so I announced to Andy when he passed this way,  
saying I should like to turn the place inside out within an hour  
and have it back together by 2 o'clock. As I was  
was indicating the rush and what program I wanted to follow,  
Father Calahan and Father MacElroy appeared. They had obviously  
heard my admonition to rush things a bit. They said they felt  
shame-faced for asking but they had some people from  
Ireland coming at 2:30 and wondered if they might have a tour. I to  
them they might if they would put on their calico dresses  
and conduct it on their own hook since I had an  
appointment. They asked if Sister might be here and when I  
replied negatively, -- as of that moment, at least,  
they nodded and said they would make a try at it.

I started to head into a mountain of work as they  
departed but a secretary appeared and I had to know the contents  
of a letter from Mr. Hodges before Ola Mae arrived. We ran  
through that hurriedly and I got only part of it, -- the  
part I wanted to know about Kay's lemon verbena which  
Mr. Hodges thinks is in the garden and which he will share with me.  
Send this news to Kay so she will have it before going to the  
hospital. She seemed so anxious to get the plant she will  
be the happier to know that it will be available eventually. There  
was more in the Hodges letter, suggesting to come over to spend  
a night but I shall have to read that more carefully on the  
morrow unless a late arriving secretary should turn up unexpectedly  
tonight and as it is already after 10, that seems doubtful.



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Dismissing the secretary, I turned to Andy and the house and

got it back in order. Water was streaming down my person in the form of sweat. I took off my shoes on the front gallery and placed them in the sun, sent Andy over to the big house with some dishes and should have been there yesterday while I jumped into the tub to get a quick shower and some fresh clothes before the ladies arrived. Picture my disappointment on grabbing the soap to discover that Clyde Claude Emmet Davis had selected just that moment to filter the water, cutting off my supply from the well source. I shouted for Andy, and he came into the bathroom, pointing to the front gallery and saying some gentleman was there waiting to see and he thought him another priest. I asked Andy to make a few trips to the big sugar pot with a bucket and by such a hand manipulated contraption, I succeeded in getting my bath. I then stepped out on the gallery, pretty fairly clothed to find Father Wil of the Episcopal Church in town awaiting me. I told him of the big rush and he explained he had been unable to reach me by phone and had just come along down regardless to make a preliminary farewell, as he is quitting Louisiana for Illinois, Collinsville, which seems to be somewhere not too far from St. Louis and Cahokia. I regretted he lingered on, for I had lots to do but blinger he did until 3:30 when Ola Mae and an associate arrived.

Clouds were rolling up and so I said Goodbye to Father Wilson a hastened the ladies through a quick tour, passing old Ireland along the way but merely nodding and not stopping.

It began pouring when we got back to Yucca and we talked business a bit from production point of view. Mr. Hodges had called on Ola Mae the other day to say he wanted my of writing to appear in his Magazine and would she conslt me about contributing a page for each of the year's four issues. Nothing was said about compensation. Also he wondered if I would do the box type of notice for a flock of newspapers to appear weekly. For some reason, not clear to me, Ola Mae wants to get four of these published in a Shreveport and Hatchitoches paper before presenting the program. Perhaps he cannot imagine anything in this realm without seeing it. I said I would cooperate. They departed about 5:30 and that was that, except that Ola Mae said Carolyn is in New Orleans where her film about the oyster is being enthusiastically received. I didn't remark that on July 1st she had threatened to photograph the Ghana garden on August 2nd and, of course, hadn't at a peep since. Well, so much for a part of today and now for work of the desk variety and thence to sleep, I hope.....

10698

10698

Thursday, August 25th, 1960.

Memorandum: Humid and warm with Kantichotches getting a wash-out this afternoon but with us, happily, getting only la tonnerre.

The cattle over-seer told some of his workmen this mid morning that if he didn't feel better by noon, he doubted if he would return from the field for dinner. But he did return, ate his dinner and, on arising, suffered a heart attack. Tonight he is under an oxygen tent in the hospital.

Over the coffee cups there was much talk about Pilgrimage and the lady's enthus asm about lending a hand at Oakland. She has two contradictory visions as to future Pilgrimages, one being that she dou ts much if Melrose is ever on one again, and, second, that she hopes next year we can have enough plantations on the tour so that we may have half of them for a morning tour and the other half on an afternoon tour so that Maganolia could be on in the morning and she could massit Dee, bringing her back at noon to Melrose with a view to Dee assisting at Melrose. Such a program ought to entail quite a lot of sugar for a dime, I should think. After I have greeted five hundred people or so in a morning, I'm not too impatient about greeting five hundred more in the afternoon, proving once more that there's no accounting for taste.

I also learned over the coffee cups that J. H. has been urging Sister to return her this week, -- an incredible bit of poor judgement, it seems to me. I pause to knock wood in reporting that as of 6 p.m. this evening she had not put in an appearance and I suppose I might well have heard the racket, had she blown in since then. The extent of J. H.'s concern for members of his family seem



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10699

beyond measure but it seems to me he sometimes falls into error when his sympathy for one of them impells him to engineer situations that do the object of his concern little good and up-sets no end of applecarts for the others.

I have intended asking before now if you have chanced to see a movie, "On the Beach". I know nothing about it, save its name. I have heard people on the radio, giving the impression of being civilized, say it is excellent. I have also heard many a Bible slapper on the radio declare it to be outrageous, thereby, probably, giving the film some dandy box office receipts.

Tonight, on "People You Didn't Expect to Meet", mention was made of another movie about which I hadn't heard before. I believe it is called "All Young Men" and has something to do about the Korean war and participation of both colored and white soldiers in some sort of a battle with the enemy, followed by some rape episode. The subject matter sounds as though the film might be controversial and as military stories never interested me much, I suppose I might have paid no attention to the publicity this film received, had not the racial thing quickened my curiosity.

I am still casting about to find when, if ever, any stations of the CBS network, produce the Edward Murrow Sunday program, called "Background". I believe, but as yet I haven't succeeded and yesterday's letter from James threw no light on the matter.

I find myself wondering if the New York Times has endorsed either Presidential candidate as yet. Since they, somewhat surprisingly, patted Mr. Eisenhower on the back during both his campaigns, as I recall, it is probably likely they will be backing Mr. Nixon on this go-round. I must say it does seem a little odd, after all these years, that the Times and Tribune should find themselves cheering for the same party.....

10701

P. S.

Juanita B. 'phoned this afternoon while Mr Martin was here. She said she had never heard a peep from Carrie and wondered if I had. I thought Carrie said she was writing Pat but perhaps I imagined that....

10700

Friday, August 26th, 1960.

Memorandum:

According to the noon radion, it ained two and a half inches in Shreveport during the morning but here we had only sunny skies and, by some miracle, it didn't rain during the afternoon, making two days without a cloudburst.

Last night a little before midnight, I had a call from the Walkers, saying they were back from the country club where they had taken Harold Martin, a Saturday Evening Post writer, to dine. Mr. Martin wanted to know if he might come to Melrose on Friday afternoon and I said he might and come he did, with Ann Williams Britton as his guide. Ann, by the way, is showing her pregenancy appreciably.

According to the Walkers, Mr. Martin is 29, has tons of money and a big house in Atlanta, does things for the Atlanta Constitution and for the Saturday Evening Post to boot. He is said to have done a series of articles on world cities, -- Buenos Aires, Dublin, etc., for the Post and now he is doing the same sort of thing by States in the nation.

Mr. Martin gave me the impression of being nearer 39 than 29. He is a large man and didn't seem to "get" Melrose although the fact that Luther Harrison in Shreveport had given him a Hunter picture seemed to quicken his interest in the murals.

Just before he and Ann arrived, Charlie whatever his name is in Shreveport who has done work for Hodges projects, 'phoned me, giving me his Shreveport number and saying he wanted to invite Mr. Martin to visit Hodges gardens. He said he understood Mr. Martin was traveling to Alexandria from here and that Mr. Hodges' private plane could pick him up there in the morning and whisk him to the gardens and thence back to Alexandria. I told



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Итого: 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631

When Mr. Martin arrived, Ann had persuaded him he ought not to miss seeing Earl Long who is making his final election speech in Natchitoches, scheduled, I believe, for something like 7:30 or 8 o'clock. Mr. Martin thought he ought to remain and how he and Charlie worked out their business, I have no idea and care less. I am a little curious, however, to learn how Charlie got my number, as I am not listed but assume he may have got it through the Walkers.

to the gardens and thence back to Alexandria. I told

Fair yesterday and fair today with only a fifth of an inch of rain.

As you may have heard or read before now, Mr. Long won his race for the U. S. House of Representatives.

Ignorance, insecurity and intuition turned the trick. His opponent, a conservative Republican in everything but name and heavily backed by big electricity has the manners of a gentleman while Mr. Long, of course, is a buffoon. But the Legislature that met, following the advent of Jimmy Davis as Governor to replace Mr. Long, went at the Welfare Department with a meat axe where a surgeon's delicate scalpel was needed. The children of fatherless children in New Orleans are said to be hungry. Children of uncertain parental claims are also existing on a reduced diet. The racial business in schools in boiling in New Orleans and all of the contributed in their respect parts to induce people to believe that Mr. Long, regardless of everything else, was not the type to starve them. Hence Saturday's success at the poles for a man who undoubtedly will be a spectacle and a disgrace to Louisiana in Washington.

It was interesting that in the Melrose precinct, Mr. Long got about 123 votes, his opponent 22, and so it was all around central Louisiana.

It is also interesting that in Natchitoches Parish, more people voted in the run-off than in the initial election, something that is quite unheard of in these parts. So things turn when ignorance, insecurity and intuition are pushed too far and the American voter goes into the voting booth.

1. I shall drop a letter in the morning, holding the  
2. I shall drop a letter in the morning, holding the  
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When I stepped across the fence for dinner this noon, I found Dr. Ambrose Hertzog talking with Clezest and J. He was up to pass Sunday with his brother Mat, at Magnolia. Ambrose lives in New Orleans and is head of the Pathology Department at Turo. Like his family, he is a fervent catholic and a rabid racial bigot. This puts him in a unique position where Bishop Rummel of the New Orleans Diocese is raging the introduction of colored children to white schools. He, --Ambrose, cuts the Gorgon knot by simply declaring that Bishop Rummel is senile.

Ambrose confided to me that brother Mat, of "Dear Sir" letter fame is just crazy about the local gourds and asked if he might bring an Alexandria friend up to see them. So the "Dear Sir" business.

In town, there was a flurry of excitement this afternoon when a mulatto lady, living with her husband and small child just across the road from the hospital, shot her husband. He was immediately carried across the road to receive attention but died on his arrival.

On Saturday afternoon while I was on the 'phone, I glanced up to see a couple of figures moving in the living room. I terminated the 'phone conversation, dismissed a secretary and went into the other room to investigate. It was Mrs. James, wife of the Colonel James who commands R. O. T. C. at the college. The last time the Colonel and his lady invaded the place with several people, it was in the morning and I was glad to see there was but a single person with her today or this day, and while I thanked her for the bottle of imported French wine and the loaf of French bread she was bearing, I tried to point out to her, as before, that one doesn't really come to Melrose uninvited unless one has an appointment. She explained she is so bored in town and her companion in military garb, and, apparently, quite civilized, spoke of being an architect from Bryant, Texas, where ever that may be. I shall drop la James a little note in the morning, holding the thought she may not be too bored to read.....

10704

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27  
Monday, August 28th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and humid with a fifth of an inch of rain this afternoon while from Bermuda to town almost three inches more of water cascaded down from on high on cotton fields up yonder already drowning in rain.

I was delighted to find a letter from Lyme in today's post. There were three others, --Ray, James and the Rocket.

I had the services of a reader for a brief moment and so ran through the letter from Lyme, naturally, and shall see what the others have to say on the morrow. I assume the Rocket must want something but there will be ample time to see about that 24 hours hence.

I'm so happy we both had an opportunity to hear Invitation of Learning. The O'Neil discussion was provocative of thought and the tying it in with contemporary soap operas quite an original approach, I thought. Perhaps you heard this past week end's discussion of the Confessions of St. Augustin. I was a little unprepared for the man who introduced the program who placed the emphasis of the "gus" part of the word, --it has been so long since I have heard anyone pronounce it in that fashion. While on the subject of St. Augustin and his love of God, let me say that as I hear men of God talking about loving God, they somehow sound as ridiculous to me as someone might who, having visited Bedloe's island, reported that he had embraced the statue of Liberty. With God such a vast entity, it seems remarkable to me whenever I hear anyone talk about loving God who, for me represents something so vast that I am filled with wonder but never could I imagine loving Him any more than I could imagine a human being caressing the brow of the statue of Liberty of planting a kiss on her lips or even hugging the Rockie Mountains, being proportionately such a great big armful.

It was characteristically kind of you to mention the matter of the theatre tickets. I know not where Edity is staying, -- somewhere in Danbury, I believe, and I shall not be hearing from her before she gets back home. I shall try to use the



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bonds of friendship with respect, putting no more strain on them in the matter of securing tickets, than in special cases such as Pat or such like and I certainly hope that Ola Mae doesn't call on you again to secure such favors, and, in the event she ever should in the future, I hope you will rest assured that I shall approve heartily if you tell her that due to some change in policy in your organization, it is impossible to secure tickets for anyone but customers, or some such.

I'm so glad your patient has negotiated the worst of his hospitalization requirements and I hold the thought that somehow it may be engineered so that he may be placed in the hands of his offspring where he should be, it would seem. I think it noble the way friends on this side have assisted him during the rigors of the past misadventures but I think it incumbent upon his offspring to assume filial duties and not try to shift them on to the shoulders of others.

Echo was scheduled to pass over this end of the river at 7 and at 9:06 tonight and I had really planned to take a mighty gander in its direction, hoping I might glimpse this phenomenon. Clouds lingering on from the afternoon shower, however, blotted out the heavens and so I shall perhaps have an opportunity to take another slant at it tomorrow night, and this in spite of the fact that the prediction for the morrow is the same as yesterday, --widely scattered showers.

Thanks to the copious rains and constant humidity, standing at about 98, day in and day out, the gourd vines are going to pieces fast 25 to 30 dougrds a day tumbling on the ground would seem to suggest the trellises will not have much fruit to support before long but as other younger gourds keep developing, there still seem to be ample supplies.

I have a mountain of pears on the front gallery and from such a quantity and on the verge of thorough ripeness, they exude a perfume which mixes with the host of butterfly lily fragrances that produce something incredibly pleasant which I only regret I cannot wrap up and share with you.....

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10706

30  
Tuesday, August 29th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Order of wonders, it didn't rain today and it's cloudless tonight with a nice fat moon which may or may not make Echo watching difficult. The 9 o'clock round got beyond me before I tried. I shall have another bit of star-gazing at 11.

Today it was the mail that seemed to be the interesting thing. I am especially glad Kay's letter indicates so much zest for getting on with Monday's operation. The operation, according to word from James, was a success.

And the mention of James reminds me to report a point that came up in one of Kay's recent letters, I believe, wherein she remarked James didn't want her to call him by that name but didn't say what he did want. I asked I. S. Willard about that the other day and she said that Kay calls him Pipes. The Mahiers have called him Pipes always, even as has Sarah Jones and folks who knew him when he lived at 40 acres store. As he has always signed himself James in recent years, I continue writing him in that name although I should gladly address him as Pipes if he signified such a wish. It has always seemed to me every individual ought to have the right to use whatever name he prefers for he certainly wasn't consulted about what was being pinned on him at the time his legal name was bestowed on him. If Pat Nixon prefers Pat to Thelma, I, for one, have no objection and I must say Pat sounds better to me than Thelma and how anybody got loaded up with such a name as Mamie or Daisey, I cannot imagine and I am equally puzzled that once they discovered they had been handicapped by such a handle, the quicker a transformation was effected would seem the better. I think this sentence just above may have got mixed up a little as to subject and verb. A telephone call from somebody describing herself as Betty Walker called to say her sister is visiting her in Bayou de l'Enfer and she wondered if she might bring her down on Thursday. I haven't the vaguest notion as



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to anyone by such a name and I stalled her by suggesting she call in the morning, after I had had an opportunity to consult my Thursday calendar, seeing if anyone can enlighten me on the subject. Somebody must have given her my number since I am not listed in the book.

As for the Rocket's letter, I found it interesting. I was amused at "the other day" or however it was she referred to July 31st when she passed this way. I was especially interested to learn there had been negotiations at the artist's house to supply paintings either to Howard Wolf or Martin Hirsch. As for the Rocket's threat to pass this way week after sometime or other, I give no thought to that at all, having heard the same tale too often before. As for Warren's recommendation that a flock of out-buildings be restored being rounded up for an article, the aforesaid Warren will have to sit on a tack, so far as I am concerned, -- and the Rocket, too, I imagine. Why Warren simply doesn't use the grand pictures of Ghana that he has, present the article as a sample of what can be done and make everybody happy, I cannot imagine but he seems to have his heart set on doing a whole flock of houses or buildings, presenting them en masse instead of presenting one as a concrete example. I, for one, will have nothing to do with the project as he envisions it.

I appreciate James' kindness in sending me the August 27th Sunday Advocate clipping about Ghana, -- the first I had know about its date of appearance. I am enclosing one therewith and shall send the other to Mrs. Spinks who is keeping a scrapbook. I have no doubt the General, or Sarah Jones and others will be sending others so that if you need a second, it will be readily available, I am sure.

As Pat Baldrige never laid eyes on Melrose or me, it seems to me she handled the story well enough and I shall drop her a note of appreciation tonight. I simply must do a column tonight, too, and I'm supposed to do an article for the Hodges Gardens Magazine tomorrow's post, too, not to mention a few letters, including some No's to people asking for September tours, etc. And so I shall roll up my shirtsleeves and get busy, although, I'm not wearing a shirt. Blythe sent me a bouquet of Angel Trumpets this morning at 8 by the artist. She must have been stirring early to get up here at that hour.....

10708

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31st  
Wednesday, August 30th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Magnificidntly clear, humid but not quite so much as yesterday, thanks to the drying strength of the sun traveling through ozone as "clear as a Christian".

Picture my surprised this afternoon about 2:30 when the clerk called me from the store to say that, seated in the lady doctor's car in front of Celeste's, was none other than Madam Regard.

It didn't take me long to reach the spot where I found her, the lady doctor, Desiree and Madam Regard's nurse, Florence Lacour.

With perfect delicacy and seeming naturalness, the lady doctor explained that Florence had long wanted to have a look at Melrose and would it be alright if she and Desiree took her on a tour while Madam Regard and I held down the car.

I found Madam Regard had lost some weight since the last time I saw her, about 10 months ago but otherwise I found her exactly the same, sweet, loveable and as mentally alert as before her illness.

We spoke of her adventures in the Alexandria and Hatchitoches hospitals and in the Alexandria-Pineville nursing home all about which she told me in some detail. She also mentioned the names of many people who had visited her while down yonder, including Blythe, Joan and so on.

With the thermometer around 90, she was dressed appropriately in a summer dress and sat in the car without any visible comfort-aids such as pillows or anything of the sort.

She told me she felt her leg was slow in getting rid of

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1960, August 20th, Thursday

its aches and pains. She seemed comforted when I congratulated her on being a better patient than Kay who is but half her age and is still having surgery on her hip.

She expressed regret on J. H.'s account that the rains had been so frequent and were bound to have effect the cotton adversely. I assured her that pecanese were more valuable than cotton, that J. H. had prayed for rains for pecanese trees and it had come bountifully and that the crop was excellent and, thanks to the moisture, were beginning to fill out splendidly. That seemed to comfort her, too, for obviously she is the type who would be thinking about expenses and the knowledge that a bumper crop was in the making seemed to perk up her spirits appreciably.

Eventually her three companions returned, Desiree pleased with her companion on the tour, --the boxer, --and Florence was delighted with the flowers she had seen and, I am glad to say, had picked herself a fine bouquet, while the lady-doctor seemed to beam with satisfaction that she had been able to engineer this little outing that was obviously pleasing her patient so much. I was enchanted at this opportunity to chat with the patient alone for at least 20 minutes, sitting with her in the car. Celeste, of course, wasn't at home, being somewhere in town. J. H. went to Dallas yesterday with J. H. Williams and as he will not be back until tonight, he missed seeing the visitor, too. Naturally Madam Regard spoke of those of whom she and I are fondest and so it is entirely understandable if there was a twitching in the ears of little Miss Lee along about that time.

I sent some pears to the former overseer, Mr. Earnest, and a few bushels to the artist. On the phone, the latter told me of a lady up the road who had chopped off her husband's neck. I suppose that was no laughing matter for the husband but I have been giggling in my beard at the news, this being the first time I ever heard of anyone getting his neck instead of his head chopped off. I'm bound to pass that one along to James. And so goes Wednesday and may it have been equally pleasant in Lyme.....

10701

10710

Thursday, September 1st, 1960.

#### Memorandum:

A lovely, hot summer's day and, withal, cloudless until 4:45 when a cloud suddenly appeared, dumped five sixths of an inch of rain on us within a few minutes, the sun shining all the while, and then the blue heavens took over again completely and tonight, although damp, is golden in the waxing moon.

It goes without saying I was enchanted that Tuesday's air mail from Lyme arrived today. It is so nice to have a picture of the Tuesday scene and to contemplate week end outing which sounds like quite a ways out. I'm so glad there will be companions to share in the doings if one must of necessity be denied solitude. I hold the thought the weather may be ideal.

I'm so glad to have the O. Hamerstein obituary and appreciation. I did not quite finish the latter and so may not get around to return it until Friday's memo goes forward. In the mean time, my sincerest thanks for having done so nobly to provide me with the particulars about which I had asked.

I agree with you in feeling that there's something out of joint in the Magazine policy that seems to depend on contributions of materials instead of paying for them on some sort of a business basis. I have known smart business men who think they have turned a neat trick in getting literary and pictorial material for nothing from the creators of same. I'm wondering if this is the case in the Magazine matter. One of the most amazing things that I know about in regard to public relations in that quarter is that Ola Mae has never charged enough for her services to make it worth her while so far as this particular customer of hers goes. I believe she operates on the theory that prestige pays off from other quarters but if that is what makes it so dubious about her own business transaction, I can't see that she or anybody else benefits much by proceeding on that line of operation. I don't like



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to think that the invitation to the Gardens by Mr. Hodges has anything to do in his mind with discarding his indebtedness to me for contributing to his public relations but perhaps that is the case. I think I shall shy away from accepting the invitation forthwith, --until after the October Magazine has gone to press, at least, and then see what Ola Mae has to say, although how I shall get her ear, I wouldn't know, off hand. Perhaps she feels the presence of my name on the by-line in the Magazine is sufficient compensation but, of course, she is mistaken. But, of course, if she does all her Hodges work at a loss, she probably can't imagine anybody else expecting a fair return on energies expended. Be that as it may, I shall take the matter up with her. I must say, in view of the absence of any reference by Mr. Hodges in his letter to me of any reference to my contributions to Magazine, it does seem as though he might have at least mentioned he had recently consulted with Ola Mae on the matter of securing my services. Millionaires who are so delicate about mentioning anything so mundane as paying for anything are as old as gold but, for a while, at least, perhaps a month, I shall continue to hope Mr. Hodges is not in this class although his Christmas present of an azellia last season does seem to suggest he didn't set too high store in balancing off the assortment of ideas I had presented to him gratis during the year and which he himself had approved of with a degree of heartiness.

I was so good of you to look up the E.R. Morrow broadcast time and translate it for me. I am usually free at the 10 to 11 hour on Sabbath mornings and I shall do a dab of sampling but I suspect the endless church services will still be holding forth that late in the morning. As you suggest, however, perhaps I may discover the same program at some other hour or even some other day.

In today's Enterprise, in the legal news section, there is an account of Gus Wortham transferring to Sterling Evans the Little Eva properties, --Chopin and Oakland, for fifty thousand dollars. As this property is worth over half a million dollars, one wonders what combinations it entails. I suppose it's just another of those slick business deals wherein the awfully rich are able to escape taxes by juggling investments and so leave it to others to carry the true tax burden.

Celeste reported at coffee this morning that her mama didn't show any particular tiredness after her jaunt into the country yesterday. Celeste said she was sorry she couldn't be here but she was busy playing bridge at the Jerry Pratt's, or some such place. Hummmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm.

10712

Friday, September 2nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Today's was a duplicate of yesterday's weather except the half inch rain came at 3:45 instead of 4:45.

"I'm looking for a wilabo," replied the son of McKinley Brown, a youth of perhaps 18 or 20 summers, whom I encountered, detached from the other field hands who had been sent to me at dawnning to do what they call gardening.

There had been several big baskets of pears gracing the gallery for the past few days and as all of my friends of color love pears, I thought perhaps a wilabo might be some particular variety. But just for fun, I asked him to repeat what he sought.

"A wilabo", he repeated.

I asked him if he liked to eat them. He giggled all over and then doubled up with mirth. I asked him to pantomime what he was asking for. He did a perfect job and anyone would have known what he had in mind and so I opined:

"Oh, what you're looking for is a wilabo!"

and he agreed, subeiving what was probably an impulse to remark that that was what he had been saying all the time.

I told him I thought he could find one under the back stairs at the big house. He headed off in that direction and, sure enough, I saw him a minute later, heading out with it, happy as a c. and just what he had said in the first place he was looking for,-- a wilabo, to be sure, but sometimes called a wheelbarrow.

The picture in yesterday's clipping of Alexander Scourby and his play-acting associates reminds me that I have already asked the Library to send me Within The Budding Grove as soon as it becomes available. I am so glad you mentioned that matter in a recent letter. I assume Mr. Scourby has completed the reading if he is now getting ready to appear again behind the footlights. I have often wondered if he ever tries holding down both the theatre job and the Foundation reading job at the same time.



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Friday, September 3, 1960

The moon is lovely tonight and the last time I took a turn on the front gallery, I noted no illumination at the big house, leading me to assume that neither of the expected members of the family have arrived as yet. It will be so pleasant if I can say the same thing on the morrow at this hour.

I talked with Ann Williams Britton this afternoon. As she related some adventures she and Jack had experienced, she interrupted her subject to remark that from her Chamber of Commerce desk, she could glimpse Mrs. Charles Cunningham just entering the A. and P. store across the street. And thus I learned that the honey-mooners were back from Porto Rico.

This led Ann to mention her Auntie Beaufort's party, scheduled for Saturday, September 10th. She said that Beth seems to be going all out to put on an afternoon tea that will properly impress all ladies present, what with food coming from where ever, flowers flown in from the same direction, etc., etc. She said that Beth, Charles and Crockett Morris had made up the list of those to be bidden to Beaufort to meet the bride and that Charles is having the invitations engraved, suggesting that Charles is getting into the act a little anyway, although a little in advance.

As I may have indicated in a previous memo, the tea itself is sort of a spite thing. Beth heard that Charles' sister-in-law, Mildred, --Mrs. Peyton Cunningham, was not planning anything especially elaborate by way of introducing the bride to local society and that was enough to impell Beth to volunteer to stage a tea that would properly impress everybody, including, I suppose, the wealthy bride. With the rains having been soaking the Bermuda cotton fields every day for weeks, resulting in the cotton rotting in the bolls and the seeds sprouting therein, not to mention payments on Typo Plantation coming due before long, poor Vernon is certainly noble to go along with his wife's whims.

What with mail deliveries suspended over the Monday holiday, this memo, going forward Saturday morning, will be the last before next Tuesday, of course. I shall be thinking of little Miss Lee, the while, wondering now if she has reached her destination, as yet, and on Tuesday, wondering if she is making it back to her satisfaction.....

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Sunday, September 4th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Remarkable to relate, we got no rain either yesterday or today. The promise is for clear skies for the morrow. In pursuance of your kindness in suggesting an hour when I might encounter the Murrow program, I made it a point to go into radio listening seriously this morning, starting promptly at 10. There were the usual and endless church services but I stuck with the receiving set and Lo! at 11:05, the much sought after program came in perfectly. As I usually quit Yucca for dinner across the fence about 11:20, I didn't get the tail end of the thing, an editorial by E. R. M. about the TV debates in person by the two major candidates, but even so, I got a part of that, plus all the other summation of news preceeding it. Again my thanks to you for setting my feet on the right road. I shall be at the same dial in the sabbaths ahead, you may be sure. Well, thus far, the holiday has been nothing to complain about. Sister and daughter arrived Friday night between 9 and 10, I believe, and Joe around midnight. Being in many ways alike, so far as emotional instability is concerned, they seemed to serve as a short-circuit on each other's social behavior and everything rocked along in surprising peace. That Joe and I should hit it off alright is simply running ture to form but that Sister should have been "so ldvin'" was a pleasant change from her usual behavior. She came to call on me twice, not for the charm of my company, but because she wanted to stay away from the big house whenever Joe was there and she even brought me some military clothing which I shall be able to dispose of advantageously for one or another of my local friends when cooler weather arrives.

The artist 'phoned me at 2 on Saturday afternoon, saying



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that lady over at the camp had just arrived and had stopped at her house, asking her to phone me to come to break bread at 7 with them at the camp. Sister must have learned from the store that Blythe had arrived, for she immediately hot-footed it for the camp but was back by 5:30 and, as her daughter had an appointment for today, it was necessary they return to Shreveport and J. H. insisted they leave before dark. That left the camp comparatively quiet and so I moseyed over to shrimp gumbo with Blythe, Joan and Miriam. The food and company were appetizing and the walk home about 10 under a full moon through snowy cotton fields just grand.

I got to hear Invitation to Learning before going out to sup. The Scarlet Letter of Mr. Hawthorne was taken apart and put together again. Somebody pointed out that it was a study of the various effects, -- devastating effects, isolation had on some of the early New Englanders. I was glad to hear this interpretation for it seemed to make pretty good sense, although, for the life of me, I cannot imagine why H. Hawthorne, esquire, didn't say as much in his long Preface, if that, indeed, was his purpose. It might have made the reception of his book just as satisfying and it might have cleared up a lot of stuff for those of us in the following hundred years who have waded through the story.

I knocked off a piece for the October Magazette this afternoon and a couple of suggested advertisements. I am conscious of several errors in these textes, but when making them, it seemed better to barge on ahead and not try to do anything about them until I had wrapped up the whole thing and so I shall get Miriam Johnson to run through the pages with me on the morrow when she comes over with Blythe who wants to get some gourds and corncobs and things. She and Joan can get lost in the Ghana section while Miriam and I do a dab of proof reading.

So far, so good on the Labor Day week end and may it be equally so at the extremity of the island.....

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Monday, September 5th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Clear to vaguely hazy, the heat in the 90's and the humidity in the same bracket but, praise the Lord, no rain.

On this plantation, at least, the cotton season, so far as picking, got under way.

About 7:30 this morning, while I was busy on the phone, Joe Henry passed this way. He had two things to relate. One was in the nature of the phantom car. Last night, according to her report of this morning, Celeste saw a car drive up to the side gate. She assumed it was somebody going to the big house where Joe was sleeping and heard no one, or to Yucca where I probably wasn't sleeping, and saw no one. She was already off on a frolic this morning by coffee time and so I shall not have a report on that matter before the morrow. Suffice to say that there was no car by the side gate at dawning.

The second thing Joe had to relate was the radio report he had just picked up, announcing the death of "Uncle Earl".

There are bound to be, possibly millions, of white and colored people in Louisiana tonight who sincerely feel they have lost a champion who is not likely to be re-placed. That he was a scoundrel and a buffoon in many respects is beside the point in their minds. The poor folks never got anything much before the days of Huey and Earl. They paid for it with what they got under them but at least they got it.

Of course there are plenty of other people in Louisiana and elsewhere who will breathe a sign of relief that "Uncle Earl" will be up-setting no more apple carts. It must make a heap of difference of nephew Russell who now, at long last, may really aspire to the Governor's chair with some hopes of not being short-circuited by "Uncle Earl". Nobody can figure out why Russel should want to give up being U. S. Senator for a mere Governor's post. Perhaps, as is said to happen sometimes, Huey's son wanted to be everything his papa had been. It is true that Russel, unlike his kin folks really wants bigger money than the Federal Congressmen can get under the table and the Governor's job is a desirable post to realize such hopes and it must be



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admitted that, unlike his papa and his uncle, Russell is civilized and there's just no telling what that attribute might impell him to want.

If Russell were like his papa, he would be making a three ring circus out of Uncle Earl's funeral, thereby garnering lots of extra votes on his next election go-round. I think he is on friendly terms with his Auntie Blanche and perhaps he and she will work out something satisfactory to each other. I believe there was some sort of a divorce or separation suit pending but as it had never gone through the legal mill, Blanche will naturally enjoy all the widow's rights, now that Earl is no more.

I had a message for Blythe this morning about 9:30 and invited Joe to drive me over in his folks wagon. He chatted with the ladies with zest, calling President Eisenhower, whom all three ladies adore, "that goddam crook", much to their consternation. Blythe, at least, has known Joe and Sister for about 35 years and she always expresses her fondness for both. Accordingly, it seems to me, it is only right that she should know them both better.

I brought home from the camp a grand arrangement of dried grasses and flowers, inserted in a gourd and flanked by wonderfully colored lichens which Blythe had fashioned for me. I placed it in the Ghana cabin between the dolls depicting the Reverend Jesse Shore and wife. It's a prize number, really and will delight many a person who appreciates the color and form worked into the composition.

About 5 this afternoon the artist 'phoned to say she would meet me at the fence with a "package" which the cap ladies had just left with her for me. --they heading out for Alexandria. It was a complete dinner which I did not need at the time but which I shall nibble on a little later tonight when I have done some work on this keyboard. Even with generous ibblings, it will still be enough for another go at the fare tomorrow night. And so passeth the Labor Day week end, reminding me of Lyle's birthday and the Labor Day week end here in 1938 but somehow reminding me even more of Lyme and the joy of communing in that direction.

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Tuesday, September 6th, 1960.

*Memorandum:*

Fair.

I don't recall if I mentioned it yesterday or not and so I shall run the risk of repeating myself. Yesterday morning, just before going over to the Rand camp, I saw my old secretary, Mr. Brew on the store gallery. I thought he looked fine but his voice, as I discovered when he passed this way later in the day, seemed husky beyond the effects of a cold. It wasn't whiskey, for he was sober as a deacon. I hope he isn't going to have throat trouble. He returned to Houston last night.

But I seem to have got myself off the track with the former secretary before arriving at what I had to say about a present one, --Mark Rogers. I had, of course, been thinking over the week end that 22 years ago I had made my initial bow locally on September 4th and 5th, and when Mark arrived, forgetting there would have been no mail on Labor Day, he announced it was his birthday, having been born on the same September 5th of 1938 that I remembered so clearly. My beard felt so long as I recalled that since then Mark had not only grown up but had included in his experiences service in Korea.

At coffee this morning I heard about the phantom car of Sunday night which Celeste had seen parked by the side gate. She dismissed it as probably having been one of the Wenks who changed his mind on discovering Joe was here.

J. H. received a card from Sister today, reporting that on Saturday night, sometime after leaving here, --7 o'clock or later being the hour before she got out of Hatchitoches, she and her daughter picked up her, --Sister's, son John just above Hatchitoches. Perhaps John had been courting one of his Hatchitoches girl friends. It is said he avoids Melrose because of his resentment against J. H. who gave him a Dutch Uncle going over the last time he was down this way, sometime in the Spring, I guess. The boys continue living with their father and the girl has expressed her preference to stay with her father, too. Surely a mother of three children must feel her effort at raising a family

.....thais some 2 to 3 days from the same plant



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quite a success when all three of her children express a preference to thier father's company. In some States, at one time or another, and comparatively recently, it was the habit of the Court to assign the boys to the mother, the girls to the father. I know not if this custom persists but, if so, in the present instance it is apparently being left to the children to decide. Since the daughter has already confided to several people, including Blythe, Mrs. Spinks, etc., that she cannot find life worth living if she has to be with her mother, it is perhaps just as well the Court leaves it to the children to decide although, in this instance, of course, were the Court to make a decision, following habit, the girl would go to her papa.

It is pleasant to report that the autumnal garden at Ghana is beginning to take on substance. I noticed today that all the turnips I had planted just inside the borders of all the parterres, are beginning to push out of the round and are looking as pretty as a young turnip possibly could. The recent rash of field hands, tentatively turned gardeners by J. H. until the dew had dried, ruined two parterres and the central circle, having hoed up grass so vigorously that they chopped the roots of the coxcomb, zinnia and such like, all of which have turned yellow and keeled over. I shall make a clean sweep of these sections on the morrow, planting additional turnips, more lettuce, beets, sweet basil radishes, mustard and so on and, the weather being normal for the season a few weeks hence, we ought to have quite a treasury of food on which we may draw for quite a while, for things like turnips, beets, mustard and so on should be supplying vegetables pretty well into December. As for the okra, it continues producing merrily and will keep up the good work until the first frost. I intended saying long before this late date that I was so interested in what you had to report about okra the other day, for I know nothing about its history and was enchanted to learn that it may hav come over from Africa with early slavers. I believe it is kin to cotton, the leaf of each plant resembling the other. Everyone of color I know loves it and so do I. We had it across the fence Sunday and at the big house today, --as gumbo, and I'm glad it still has at least a couple of months ahead and it can gathered every 2 or 3 days from the same plant.....

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Wednesday, September 7th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot and sultry but no rain.

From the direction of the gin comes muffled sounds that indicate some bailing is going on but the present electric powered machinery operates in such a subdued manner, in striking contrast to the racket made by the former steam operated contraption, that I almost forget the thing is functioning.

I should be physically tired tonight but I don't seem to be. I pulled up the wanning coxcomb and zinnia plants, crippled by too industrious hoe hands recently, and left only the verberna at the base of the sun dial. Then, in spite of the sun, I spaded up the circle, fashioned a fine circle a foot beyond the verbenas and a second larger circle beyond that. I had divested myself of a shirt before picking up the spade and water poured from me in torrents. The package of cigarettes in my pocket dampness unglued the seams completely and my pants looked as though I had just emerged from a mill pond. But a leisurely shower before mail time and some fresh garments made a new individual out of me, --int temperature, at least.

Around 5 o'clock this evening, I moistened a plot of ground where some self-seeded sweet basil had come up and I transplanted these into the smaller circle, nearest the verberna, planting the outer circle to more turnips, watering the parterre thoroughly afterwards, and all the other parterres where I had planted more rows of stuff for the fall garden.

In dismantling the circle of flowers this morning, I discovered several random plants of coxcomb that had survived the field hands' hoed and, finding an earthen jar about three feet in height, I concluded it would be just right for the bouquet I proposed to fashion, and Lo! it did. And so there's a fine, wonderfully brilliantly hued bouquet on the table by the boudoir door on the front gallery, and although with vase and contents, it seems to be



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about six feet in height, it really doesn't look so very over-powering, in view of the height of the gallery itself. I tossed a lot of white gounds around the bast of the jar, and their whiteness gives just the proper contrast to the composition above which seems to delight both little old grandpa and me equally but perhaps for different reasons. Grandpa, at least, got the impression that the gourds I had heaped up were for him to nestle in for a prolonged siesta and his black fur gave just the proper contrast to the gourds and the vibrant colors in the bouquet.

I didn't get around to visit the two young peacocks in the Unicorn House until nearly 10 o'clock this morning. They are wonderfully tame for birds of that type and I didn't even bother to close the door behind me when I entered. One of them made the most of the opportunity to step out into the Unicorn garden for a look at the great out of doors but I made no protest, but rather continued talking to the one remaining inside and in less than two minutes, the one who had ventured out ventured in again to partake of the fine breakfast I was setting forth, -- chopped steak, corn bread, white biscuit and fresh pears and a dish of milk and another of water. Like the older birds, -- I mean Ot and Dash, -- so the younger ones, surprisingly enough, too, seem to adore milk, as I discovered early in their local career when they lent Grandpa a hand with his supper and have been doing so ever since. They all seem to prefer white bread or white biscuit or corn bread or biscuit, and although they disdain fresh tomatoes, either on or off the vine, they seem to love pears, which makes no sense at all, it seems to me.

As I haven't heard a peep out of Aunt illie, I find myself wondering if she is still in the Mississippi Valley or if she has returned to the Bluff in time for Donna. Perhaps she is in New Orleans or Baton Rouge or Hollywood or Briarwood.

The peace we are currently blessed with at this bend of the river is marvelous. I have thought so much of little Miss Lee today, wondering as to when she might be moosying eastward at the conclusion of the holiday.....

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P. S. I ran off last line. The enclosure about Uncle Earl is on no importance and my be thwon away after a quick glance at same..

Tuesday, September 8th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Fair and humid.

Having made that statement, three quarters of an hour intervened, in response to a 'phone call from I. S. Willard, and if there is anything you would like to know about Art education in Louisiana, I think I might be able to reel it off simply by passing along paragraphs from the Willard symposium.

I was interested in her Wednesday visit to the Reidheimer school where she conferred with teachers about Art as it is being fostered in that school. At the close of the session, after somebody on the faculty had mentioned the type of painting that Caroline Dorman of Briarwood does, I. S. Willard, who had never been to Briarwood, asked if it was situated in that area. It lies only a mile or two up the road from the school and one of the teachers led the way in one car. I. S. Willard following after. The other car went on and the Willard chatot drove in and found Carrie, barefoot, pulling around among her plants. The girls have known each other for half a century but I. S. Willard had just never chanced to track down La Dorman.

I. S. Willard reported Miss Dorman as looking the picture of health, bubbling over with enthusiasm and generally enchanted with the world. In the variety of conversational topics coming up for discussion, it may be assumed that I must have come up for a bit of of review for I. S. Willard remarked that Carrie had stated she felt instinctively that while it was true I possessed a rugged exterior, she felt that undoubtedly I had a kind heart. Frankly, that was more than I had expected from the Briarwood gal, after all these years.

Carrie mentioned to I. S. Willard that she had seen or was talking to somebody while in Hatchitoches on Wednesday morning. You may be quite sure that while in town, she didn't bother 'phoning Juanita B. or Pat about their desire for a magnolia in spite of Carrie professed love for Pat. And that's all I heard from that quarter that is worth repeating.



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This afternoon about 2, Blythe and with Mrs. Brewer and we sat at Ghana for a couple of hours, just talking. Then we gathered heaps of corncob which both ladies wanted, some for bouquets, some for seed against next year's planting. The ladies wanted some small gourds for an arrangement but for some reason, unknown to me, the small gourds didn't do anything this year, and so they took some big gourds instead, of these weight from 30 to 40 pounds although only 3 and a half or 4 feet in length, being in the shape of a Hercules club, the bulge part at the bottom being about the size of a basket ball, and withal quite striking in appearance. Helma returned last night from their European jaunt, just in time to read today's Cane River Memo with their first breakfast back at the college. At least the Centennial Pilgrimage gives Helma an excuse to omit this year's tour with grace. I haven't figured out as yet just what route they followed between Frankfurt and Lisbon. I thought they were going via Zurich and Geneva but apparently they didn't since John doesn't like Paris, the fact that everything was closed probably didn't make any difference. Helma said that all she could do was looking in store windows. In the Parish I knew, most shop windows were closed by shutters, making window shopping unlikely in a region where there were so many other things to see but perhaps it is all different.

Somewhere along their way, John had an accident. He is always taking pictures and on one occasion when he stepped back for a better perspective, he fell over something and apparently cracked a rib. They will go to Shreveport tomorrow to have X-rays taken for in some hospital there, a set of John's other X-rays are available and he thought it ridiculous to use in his European tour to find out if he had a cracked rib since he didn't plan to change his travel schedule anyway.

Ora called me this afternoon. She and R. B. had taken R. B. junior to New Orleans to get him installed in his freshman year at Tulane. They drove down yesterday, were pleased with the installation, then went out to the Commander's Palace for a grand meal and then to a night's rest at the Roosevelt and so back home today. He resumes her college teaching here next

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Friday, September 9th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Hot all day, with an occasional big white cloud against an intense blue until 5:30 when two tenths of an inch of rain descended. It remains muggy and I suppose we shall have another shower before morning. The 7 o'clock news sounded as though Donna might be forcing a passage into the Gulf. It seems as though she has done enough frolicking in the islands without having to barge in and stir up the neighborhood where the Father of Waters debouches into the Gulf.

I didn't see the lady across the fence this morning, she having departed departed for south Louisiana long before 9.

Helma called me about that hour, however, and just about filled up the length of a normal coffee hour with impressions of her European jaunt although she promises to come down and tell me all one of these, bringing with her the Toledo (Too-lee-doo) blade she says she and John secured for me while in that Spanish city. I hope it is a pocket knife and not a sword.

From what she said about her trip, I gather they did go from Frankfurt to Zurich and Geneva across France and thence into Spain at San Sebastian and thence to Toledo, Madrid and so on and then back across the Pyrenees and up through France, pausing at Orleans, Tours, etc., and thence on to Paris, Brussels and Rotterdam, shipping the Volkswagen to New Orleans and they taking to the air across to New York and Chicago and thence to their Illinois farm where they had left their car and so back to Hatchitoches.

She couldn't make up her mind about having a pilgrimage this year or not, and is calling a committee to vote on the matter next Thursday which is another way of saying she is determined to have it regardless since the printing of folders, etc., go straight ahead, as my agents report.

At supper time tonight, Johnny Rue appeared at my door, I asked him how his gourd crop was doing. He said I couldn't



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Imagine how lurid it was. Without saying so, I nevertheless could since he had swiped all my prize gourds for seeds last fall. He said his sister, the former Mrs. Payne Henry, had started for a month's tour of Europe today with her husband.

Father Calahan came to see me this afternoon. He spoke of the ridiculous aspects of people who assume that a college education means anything in relation to people generally who are really educated. While President of Duquesne University, he said, it fell to him to participate as host in so-called educational gatherings in Pittsburgh, attended by college Presidents and, he remarked that assuming such Presidents to be college graduates, their brain power often seemed to make a mighty poor showing so far as many of them who preened their plumage on being educated.

He discoursed at some length on the theory of rotation of the globe and the effect of the moon on water and doubts very much of the popular belief that the moon causes the tides. As a member of one or another scientific and engineer society, he apparently had advance information about the present Echo. He said the Government invested literally millions of dollars in charting the time and course of Echo before she was launched. He said he had offered to save this vast expenditure by charting the whole thing in advance, taking up the matter with Linden Johnson. He said the Senator from Texas had readily stated he himself knew nothing about such engineering matters but backed up Father Calahan's offer by recommending its consideration to the proper authorities but all that came of it was a polite letter from the Academy of Science or some such, thanking him for his offer and saying it would be given careful study. Since that communication, Echo has been placed in the skies and that is that.

After Father Calahan's departure, one of my agents reported John and Lloyd Wenk in Lloyd's car at the store. I did not see them and as they were not at supper, I assume they have gone on their way. H. sent me half a watermelon about 7 o'clock, and I'm looking forward to attacking it after I get some desk work taken care of. And so the week end begins and may it be a peaceful one in Lyme.....

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Sunday, September 11th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A dab of rain Saturday morning, followed by much blue with gobs of fleecy cotton and withal, pleasantly cool. Sunday has been without rain but the clouds and the coolness continues.

I can't seem to remember much about Saturday morning except the fun I had with the young peacocks, letting them out for a while and then letting them go back into the unicorn house. They are so tame I have to be careful not to step on them and one of them seems to prefer being held on one's lap, -- a preference he had better get over, I should think, for while it is alright now that he is the size of a chicken, he might turn out to be quite a lapful if he ever grows to full peacock status and decides he wants to keep his train elevated while parked on one's knee. Smile.

Along about 3:30 on Saturday afternoon, I decided I would pick some okra, for if it is kept picked every two or three days, it will keep right on producing. I gathered about a half bushel at Ghana and, on getting back to the Yucca gate, I thought I heard some voices beyond the bananas in front of Yucca. My beard was long and my raiment disheveled and it would not have been surprising if anyone failed to recognize me. There were four ladies and one of them advanced to meet me on the gallery, speaking as though I knew her. I didn't. I had shaken hands with her and suggested an identification. She said she was Helen Baldwin whereupon we dropped the paws and fell into an embrace. She presented the three other ladies, one of whom was her sister, Mary Belle, another lady who was the one with whom Helen encircled the globe a year or so ago and the fourth lady whose name I forget but all very pleasant.

I dropped the okra and suggested we have a go at Ghana before it rained. That was easy since it never did rain but rather the sun came out.

I parked them by St. Giggins' fountain eventually while I withdrew to take off my beard and opt on some fresh clothes. Then I showed the three ladies the big house while Helen went to say howdy to J. H. who came with her over to the car and chatted.



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Then the four of us, --J. H. left behind, -- headed up the road to "take in" Cane River. The chatter was constant. They had come by Leesville and Derry and so hadn't been along the river as yet. It was perhaps 5 o'clock as we passed Beaufort where one could see plenty of gilded carriages parked while the gentry inside must have been greeting the newly wed Mrs. Charles Cunningham.

On to town we went. Helen's sister allowed as how she had once met a lady from Hatchitoches in Michigan and that the lady had told her so much about the Hatchitoches Art Colony. She couldn't remember the lady's name. I asked if it could have been Irma Sompayrac Willard. It certainly could. Mary Belle wrote her a note and we dropped it in the Willard mail box, I. S. W. having gone to the tea and thence was heading toward New Iberia. We dined at the Town House, after which they all drove me home but did not descend so that I was back to normal by 9. They were leaving for Hodges Gardens this morning early and then were going to head back toward Waco.

I was distressed this morning to discover horses had invaded the gardens during the night and my newly planted fall garden was all torn up and I shall have to plant again.

J. H. left at 8 this morning for Hot Springs with Raymond Breazeale to attend some convention. They are scheduled to return Tuesday. Celeste had brought her sister, Celine, back with her from Mansura on Saturday afternoon and she will remain until Tuesday. Celeste got back in time for the Beaufort gathering and reports it as having been perfectly darling, what with the orchids flown in from Hawaii and sandwiches and cakes from I know not where. As Celeste explained,

Beth and Vernon may be up to their neck in debt but they certainly know how to give a darling party.

I am glad I was able to get a lot of coxcomb seed collected over this week end. It seeds while the flowers are still perfect and already new plants from this year's seeding are beginning to spring up. I cut off the blossom, string it on a wire and insert the festooned wire in a paper sack, hanging the sack in the bathroom above the water heater where it is always dry. There the seeds will gradually fall into the paper sack, not touching the blossoms and when the seeds are all out, I can use the flowers for decorations for a month or two in the sack will not effect their beauty. And that,

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Monday, September 12th, 1960.

Memorandum:

While Lyme was getting side-swiped and deluged by Donna, we were treated to one of the loouliest days of the year. It was rather like Indian Summer, clear, cool and the humidity down to 30 percent, --an almost unheard of figure in this area.

The morning post brought news of the return to home base and it goes without saying I am delighted to know that things rounded out so pleasantly except for a bit of the Sabbath rain. I hold the thought that today's down-pour did not effect transportation and that electricity is functioning normally -- two such important requisites in contemporary existence.

The same post brought a note from Aunt Willie and, it seems to me, somewhat over due. It goes without saying that I am delighted to learn, and, I must confess, somewhat surprised, to learn James had behaved in such a fashion as to make her visitation in Baton Rouge the more pleasant. The Lord knows I have preached enough sermons on this point which, strictly speaking, is none of my business and, frankly, I never dreamed I had succeeded in making so much as a dent and perhaps I really didn't. Whatever the improvement in personal relations doesn't matter. The important thing is that the visit apparently went off smoothly. Now, if the light may only shine a little brighter so that James can see his way to accompany Kay on at least one trip to Charleston, I shall have been so surprised it might quite unhinge me.

I continue, like the rest of the world, listening to news out of the Congo, all the while wondering just how long this absurd and horrible comic opera-tragedy can go on. As I have never seen the names of any of the top politicians in print, I haven't the vaguest notion as to how any of them are spelled but whenever I heard the name of the "in-again, out-again" Prime Minister I find myself muttering in my beard,

"Premier Carrumba....."



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And next to the confusion out of the Congo, the next most wacky thing I hear about from time to time is the Wenk doings. It seems to two boys were here the other day for a little while with John en route to Baton Rouge to see about matriculating in L. S. U. while Lloyd in his car was giving John a ride as far as Baton Rouge while Lloyd planned to go on to Florida to get a life saving job. I may have mentioned that a while back driving his own car, he, Lloyd, drove to Dallas to see about getting a life saving job and finding none that suited him, drove on to Las Vegas and thence to Hollywood, where, finding nothing that suited him again, he wired for traveling money to return home. He was down here with a very tall youth and an Oregon girl a while back. The tall youth was a college chum of his at L. S. U. last year. Now it turns out that this tall chum is working for Dr. Wenk, driving him about, etc., and has been since the separation. It would seem that if Dr. Wenk has to have an aid, while his son criss-crosses the country in search of a job he is praying the Lord he may not find, it might be just as well all around to have the doctor enlist the aid of his own son rather than somebody else's, although it is quite possible, of course, that he knows his own son too well. It turns out, further, that when Sister picked up her son just outside of Natchitoches, en route for Shreveport the other night, John had been down to Natchitoches to see if he could rent a room for week ends at the Natchitoches air port. Now just what a college youth in Baton Rouge would be wanting a room at a Natchitoches air port for the ensuing school year, nobody seems to quite understand except John. Surely Carrumba is the word whether it be in Leopoldville or Louisiana. And so begueth a new week and may sunshine replace the showers in Lyme forthwith.....

18701

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Tuesday, September 13th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A beautiful day but still a little too chilly, --around 60 at night, for vegetables to do much growing.

Janita B. called rather late last night, asking if she might visit me this morning. She might. She came without the little one and we dug Yucca, Giant's Beard, ferns and so on which she proposed planting this afternoon. She thought the Yucca would be difficult to do by herself but said she would get Pat to help her. That is something I should like to see, --a nery trying his hand at gardening. I filled up her car with big gourds which she had admired with enthusiasm. She was hesitant about taking many but admitted her friends would enjoy having some and off she went about 11:30.

At 5:15 this evening the Rocket called from town. She was heading for Alexandria before dark but wanted to stop off here. She arrived about 6:30 and remained until 10 o'clock, deciding to stay in town instead of going on to Alexandria until tomorrow morning.

She said that since she had been making films she had been spending money like a drunken sailor and suddenly has found herself without any money at all.

She has been doing big things with Old Bonita, converting the outside of the house from wood to brick, building a dam four feet higher than the old one, increasing the size of her lake by fifteen acres, doing the inside of the house over, including new hardware in the bathroom because she was tired of the fixtures she has been using. As the bathroom itself is something like three feet square and a place where no one is likely to linger long, the new faucets, etc., seem to be one of those things in the "drunken sailor" department. And then the bulldozers, pushing dirt around, injured some of her pines and she called Kent, Ohio, where Davey advised various paints be applied with a chance of saving them.

There was much confidential talk about Ola Mae problems. One of these has to do with Ola Mae's car having been stolen recently.



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Insurance, of course, provides her with a new one but the new one does not contain the entire set of pictorial slides of Mr. Hodges, the ones being used all the time showing not only gardens at all seasons of the year but individual plants in various stages of development. The stolen car has never been found and Mr. Hodges hasn't been told of the loss.

Ola Mae has been laying ground work to persuade Mr. Hodges to invite me to be his Andre LeNotre and Mr. Hodges seems to favor such a plan, --nobody consulting me on the point, --but there is a vast amount of intra-mural rivalry going on inside the Hodges administration, with B. C. or C. B. Byrd trying to keep control, jealous of me as a potential threat to his position as Prime Minister, while at the same time the various other heads of departments, gardening, building, etc., are fighting with each other and C. B., and so the thing whirls. I am glad to learn about this situation now so that if a gesture is ever made in my direction, I can lay down some conditions in advance. Mr. Hodges, in the mean time, inclines to be influenced by his cabinet and as they resist every change, he inclines more and more toward procrastination..

Ola Mae gets little more than expenses out of all the work she does for Hodges. By charging him bare cost in producing a thing like the magazine, there is little or no money to pay anybody for the articles. At least Ola Mae gets the satisfaction of doing a good job which is some compensation, perhaps, for her. But I shall not find sufficient compensation in that satisfaction to give away my articles for the satisfaction of either Ola Mae or Mr. Hodges, the latter being so heavily heeled that he doesn't know what to do with it. The pocket has frequently frown up from New Orleans to the Gardens for a prolonged week end on invitation. The gatherings have been delightful and the quantity of ideas of benefit to the domain have been tossed about with great abandon to the benefit of the master, but never has transportation costs or time consumed been defrayed. A summons to court seems to be sufficient compensation for both Ola Mae and Carolyn. Personally I think they are both wacky to be forever giving corn to the miller when they are starving and he is over-loaded with flour.

Carolyn asked if I thought Aunt Willie would back her in a documentary film. I thought not. She seems to forget she has ignored all her friends during lush times and they aren't likely to rush into expenditures now that she needs them. And now I must do some desk work and then fold.....

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Wednesday, September 14th, 1960.

Memorandum: to the Honorable Mr. Hodges

Another lovely day and tonight at 9:15 I had to watch the Gulf Coast, however where hurricane Ethel seems to be stirring up a quick blow. All of the New Orleans stations tonight seem to have omitted their coast-to-coast news casts and in their stead, they have presented evacuation advisories, sandwiched in between musical recordings of the transcribed variety, with frequent advise to people inhabiting the area between Grand Isle, La., and St. Marks, Fla. All schools seem to have decided to remain closed in the Parishes adjacent to New Orleans and at this moment people are said to be streaming away from the coastal area. Our local mild weather including the stars strikes one as sharply in contrast to the static on the radio from coastal cities and the rushing around of the population to batten down the hatch before the hurricane arrives.

I was delighted that today's moderating weather gave me an opportunity to re-plant sections of the Ghana garden the horses on Saturday night had knocked silly. I was particularly happy to find some more tiny sweet basil plants to set out around the sun dial and to put back the circles of lettuce, turnips and so on. I was delighted to see how nicely the things planted last week were already well above ground although the equine devastation of triangles and circles made re-planting mandatory.

I found I had time enough before supper to pick enough okra for tomorrow's gumbo at the big house, the house across the fence and at the home of one of my colored neighbors and ample supplies of tomatoes and helle peppers to go around for at least three households and leave enough for a jolly little basket for Yucca for me to nibble on.

And now I must fold.....



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Just as I turned the page, the artist 'phoned.

She was obviously a little high but only a little. She wanted to know if I had heard about the hurricane that was coming. She said she had been listing to all the news casts, and obviously she hadn't understood much about the name of last week's Donna, for she explained that she had two neighbors, one Ethel, the other Nina, and that the new hurricane was called Ethel and the old one was Nina. I interrupted her at that point to say I heard they were expecting another one and they were going to call it Clementine which induced her to go into a laughing jag I thought she would never get over.

And speaking of the artist reminds me that Ann Williams Britton called me today to read me a letter she had just received from Harold Martin. Among other things he had to report was the delight Ralph McGill, editor of the Atlanta Constitution, manifested when he saw Harold's Hunter primitives and immediately asked Harold to write to see if two couple be purchased for his collection. And so Ann called me to say the money had been enclosed and to ask if I could persuade the artist to knock off a couple for the Atlanta editor. I could.

Carmen called me this afternoon to say that in this morning's mail she had received a letter from Ola Mae, asking her to do an article about Hatchitoches for which she "would be paid the usual fee", -- the article being for a Hodges publication, either El Camino Real or the Magazette, and requesting further that a photograph of the iron circular staircase be sent as soon as possible. What interested Carmen in this request fell into two parts,

first, she had received an identical request last week and had supplied the article, and, second, she had received a like request for the photograph of the staircase last Saturday and mailed it on Monday.

The "usual fee" impressed her, too, for she admitted to me that while she had received the same sort of requests for other articles she had supplied with the "usual fee" clause accompanying each request but, over the past couple of years, she hadn't as yet seen anything of "the usual fee", leading me to conclude that that is nothing.

Well, Lord, I must now get busy. The skies continue

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Thursday, September 15th, 1950.

Memorandum:

The weather is so lovely, even as was last night, that it is difficult to imagine how rough it must have been in the Mobile-Pensacola area, although I gather Ethel must have calmed down considerably since none of the major networks tonight said anything about her. Except for one or two lovely clouds in the east and down near the horizon, the sky has been cloudless and the temperature most pleasant.

This morning about 10:30 the Rocket called from Alexandria, saying she had run away from Baton Rouge to escape the hurricane and although she had to return to Alexandria and New Orleans tonight and tomorrow, she would like to run up this afternoon to take some movies.

She came about 2 and I called the artist who had asked me to let her know whenever the Rocket happened to pass this way as she had almost forgotten how she looked. Before calling her, I suggested the Rocket and I map out a few shots that might fit in nicely with a panorama sort of thing that might eventually be called something sufficiently indefinite as to cover almost anything, perhaps the world of Clementine Hunter, or some such. We worked out some gourd scenes and some Ghana shots along the Ghana lines of I.S. Willard. The sky was such an intense blue, the pecane trees forming the backdrop to hana so deep a green and such a casually and somewhat subtle cloud low on the horizon beyond that I think the shots in that area should be delightful to the eye.

Although the butterfly lilies, because of the August rains, passed their prime, we were able to get a few shots of the artist sitting beneath heavy sprays of them along the front gallery of Yucca and I believe they, too, will turn out quite nicely. I was especially glad to have the butterfly lily shots for even though they aren't very startling, and will not be until another July or August, still, they are better than anything else to be secured any later in the season.



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I worked with the artist for each scene, suggesting how she proceed while Carolyn was adjusting the cameras, and we stuck to it until 5 o'clock when Carolyn gave her some money and candy and I gave her a big old sack full of vegetables and she seemed especially delighted with the broadleaf mustard greens. She invited us to her granddaughter's wedding about the 1st of October when Willie Mae, Jackie's daughter, will be married. That might be an advantageous time to get the social aspect of the World of Clementine Hunter but who can tell where a Rocket might be two week hence.

We had almost no time for chit-chat but I did learn one unexpected adventure Ola Mae had last night. After her car was stolen the other day, she rented another until the insurance company provided her with another. She worked at her office last night until midnight and when she left, the keys to her rented car wouldn't work. She called a taxi and went home and this morning, on her way to her office, stopped at a garage to see about having someone investigate the lock, only to discover that the rented car had vanished. To have one car stolen in a week is bad enough but two cars seems a little too much.

I am fascinated by the doings in the Congo as that fandango moves along from day to day, each more fantastic than the preceeding. I am convinced that sooner or late a dictatorship of one kind or another, --let us hope not one from the Kremlin, will have to be set up and that a dictatorship must continue to control not only the Congo but scads of the other African States for decades to come. Our enthusiasm for Democracy sometimes seems to mislead some of our own politicians into assuming that any nation can have a democratic form of Government while ignoring the fact that democratic Government can function only if a large measure of the inhabitants have some notion about a variety of things. The poor people of the Congo seem to have stepped from the Stone Age into the 20th century in a single leap and they are going to be incapacitated by the jolt for a long time to come.

I gave the artist some paint this afternoon and she just called me to say she is sitting up painting late tonight and wasn't at all tired from her round with the camera.....

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Friday, September 16th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A perfectly lovely day.

It looks like a quiet week end a though one never knows about such matters.

The S. G. Henrys have been in Houston and Dallas and will drive to Shreveport tomorrow, visit the sisters of each member of the family and then drive on here to spend the night, probably arriving around supper time. As I never participate in the nightly gatherings across the fence, I shall not participate, should there be one. As Blythe has not been up this way this week, perhaps she, Joan and Miriam will be up and, if so, they will probably invite me for 7 o'clock supper and I shall accept. The S. G.'s will continue on to Baton Rouge after Sunday morning breakfast.

Yesterday the artist mentioned her granddaughter would be married about the first of the new month, not recalling what the new month might be styled. Today her daughter, Jackie, mother of the prospective bride, told me her Willie Mae will be married on the second Sunday in October and I have no doubt this is true and that daughter and granddaughter are more clear about calendar dates than the artist. The artist herself is planning to give the infare at her home. In view of the fact that in the past, the artist has always held down the pper floor of the African House, and undoubtedly plans to do so this year, no bothering to notice that the pilgrimage and the infare come on the same day, and so perhaps it is just as well that we shall not be on the pilgrimage this year for at least that eliminates the problem of casting about for a hostess or two in that quarter. Bu I suppose the pilgrimage itself is going straight ahead and I shall count myself lucky if I don't get bogged down with more invaders from the pilgrimage than the pilgrimage itself might bring forth.



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While I think of it, I shall mention  
Ada Jack Carver. I don't recall  
if I referred to her last week but don't mind repeating  
if I did. She returned to Europe this summer  
and has been doing the Scandinavian countries, returning  
to Paris, --Boulogne-sur-Seine, with  
the David Snells. David has been pretty busy all summer for  
Life, what with all the African and especially the Congo business  
business going on. The David Snells have never gone out  
socially in Paris which seems rather odd, especially to  
I. S. Willard who provided them with names and addresses of  
a flock of kin folk living in and about Paris, friends of  
Irma's and relatives, too, and therefore kin of  
the Carvers and the Snells.

David's job as head of Life on the Continent comes to  
and end this fall, perhaps October 1st, whereupon he will  
leave Paris and take up residence in London to be head  
of Life in Great Britain. It is interesting that in spite of  
the fact that most of their kin folk from 18th century strains live  
in France, the Carver-Snells are impatient to  
begin life in London where they have friends, of  
course, but whether these will be cultivated or not,  
I. S. W. doesn't seem sure since society has been so  
studiously avoided on the continent. I believe Ada Jack will return  
to Louisiana sometime during the autumn and will perhaps  
go back to Britain in the Spring, much depending, I. S. W. thinks, on  
whether Ada feels any impulse to begin writing again  
during her stay around here.

I heard a portion of an interview with Ambassador or  
Governor Harriman given on the radio tonight and  
I gathered from what was said, I had tuned in late, that he  
is recently returned from a round in Africa. I was much  
impressed by his reference to the headlines the African  
press gave to the plight of the negro children in Louisiana,  
out off from Welfare assistance. I perhaps mentioned  
that next Thursday's column, under the title of  
"The Governor, the Queen and the Children" is a broadside  
against the recent laws enacted by the Legislature under the  
approval of the Governor. Brickbats will begin sailing  
in my direction as soon as the paper is off the press but  
I don't mind at all.

It was so warm this afternoon I had to change raiment a  
couple of times, what with the sweat oozing so bountifully.  
I am eradicating the rubble left by last weekend's  
visitation by the horses and putting in order the  
vegetable rows where the seeds were just coming up nicely. I  
hold the thought the week end may be quiet both in Lyme and locally.

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Sunday, September 18th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Once in a while in spring, once in a while in the fall  
do we seem to have perfect days, one after the other, and such  
has been the climate here this week end. I hold  
the thought it may have been equally fine in Lyme.

The S. G.'s arrived Saturday night in time for supper.  
They had spent the day in Shreveport on their way back from  
a week in Houston and Baton Rouge. They found the lady's  
brother-in-law, Sam Gavit, recovering from his operation, slowly  
but surely. The General told me he had taken Sister and her  
daughter out to lunch but couldn't tell if things were  
any different from before.

After supper, everyone repaired to the house across the  
fence, that is to say, everyone except me. In the  
afternoon, Celeste's nephew, Joe Regard and wife, had  
driven up from New Iberia with a view to seeing  
Madam Regard today. And thus the J. H.'s, the S. G.'s and  
the Joe Regards made a six-some and all went off merrily.

About 7:30 there was a terrible crash in front of the  
house next door, the bang coming at the juncture of  
the Bermuda and the Melrose-Montrose roads. Two rattletrap  
cars owned by field hands on the Cohen and Hertzog  
plantations ran into each other, utterly demolishing both of them  
surprisingly enough, doing little injury to  
the occupants who, I understand, were on the high side. And  
I must relate all this to James, for he will like it, I'm sure.

Perhaps half an hour later, a rather fine car  
trundled over in the ditch on the Melrose-Montrose lane. The  
pair of cars that had telescoped in front of J. H.'s had just been  
left there they had smashed since they weren't worth pulling  
apart and could all be junked on the morrow. But in the case  
of the third car which wasn't badly banged up, the owner of  
that one phoned to town and instructed an auto wrecker to come and  
pick it up and haul it in to town where the owner would investigate  
this morning. And so, in a short time, the wrecker did indeed come  
and picked up one of the two telescoped cars and hauled it to town  
and the last knew, the good car for which the wrecker had been called.



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still resting upside down on the Montrose lane..

The General came to see me as usual this morning, -- a custom he always follows when here and we had a nice chat. He never voices strong political feelings but it was obvious he is for Nixon are all the bankers, I suppose.

They left for home about 10 and J. H. and Celeste were taking the Regards to dinner in town and invited me but, of course, I declined and dined pleasantly enough all by myself.

About 3 o'clock, Blythe and Joan came to see me, bringing some elegant sandwiches, cake and the Lord knows what all, including a big bouquet and some plants of special interest for somebody like Blythe or Carrie who have the ability to fiddle with odd things that are rare but require more attention than I am likely to give. Blythe threatens to bring some ladies along mid week to see the go and I gave her and Joan a flock of the latter when they got ready to depart. Blythe loves to fiddle with all such things and really turns out some splendid creations.

She didn't have any particular news although she did mention that La Applegate, daughter of Joe Evans, had called her twice last week, both times quite drunk. She declared on one occasion, that she had spent the day in Natchez and had dined with Miss Myra who, La Applegate claims, is flying about in the pink of health, driving her own car and generally behaving as though her years of ill health were gone forever. Blythe suggested that she and I drive over to Devereux to spend the day with Miss Myra but, naturally, I'll let you know when I begin dreaming about going to Natchez to spend the day.

Only last night I thought of Miss Myra when John Fischer who sounds just like her, appeared on invitation to Learnit to discuss Le Mort d'Arthur. Mr. Cecil of the British Information Service was the other guest and I liked the whole business. I wish they had tied in Chanson de Roland and Roman de la Rose which seem to me should have somehow found a place in the discussion but it didn't pan out that way.

I hold the thought there may have been  
pleasure with leisure at Lyme.

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Monday, September 19th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Another lovely summer's day and w<sup>th</sup>al pleasantly warm in the 90's. I wonder what has happened to hurricane Florence. I didn't hear a single radio news cast reference to her. Perhaps the Russian and Cuban blow-ins put a mere atmospheric hurricane in the shade.

I was impressed this morning by the wheels and reels, in a manner of speaking, can be set in motion by a mere casual remark.

While waiting to use the store 'phone; --mine was out of whack for a change, I fell to talking with some of the gin men, --Fugabou and one or two mulattoes whose names I did not know. Someone remarked on what a fine day it was. I agreed and recalled that the Fair in town, running for the week, was starting off with good luck so far as the weather was concerned and that I hoped the Church Fair across the way would be equally blessed when the 15th and 16th of October rolled 'round.

One of the mulattoes said he understood the Church Fair was to be held on the 8th and 9th. I said I thought it was to be the same time as the Hatchitoches-Cane River Pilgrimage which was the middle of the month. I had written a Cane River Memo on the subject and put those dates in. He said that Father Calahan at Church yesterday had said something about the Fair and Pilgrimage being at the same time, too, but had twice mentioned the 8th and 9th of October.

I was planning to send in my C. R. M. in today's post and I recalled the folders the Hysterical Ladies were getting out, mentioning the Church of the Children of Strangers' Fair was due to go to the press today. Something told me I had better get busy.

I accordingly contacted Celeste who said she had told the Church that this year's Pilgrimage would be the second week end in October and had assumed that would be the 15th and 16th. I called the Reverend Fathers and they said they had been told just that by just that person and accordingly had supposed the Pilgrimage would be on the 8th and 9th and had accordingly made plans accordingly for booths to be set up.



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electricity spread about the place, coke machines contracted, etc., and so they guessed they would have to stick to the 8th and 9th even though it was the week end before Pilgrimage. I called the Publicity Section of the Hysterical Ladies and got them to stop the presses or rather, not to let the start, until the reference to the Church had been taken out and some other notice inserted in its place, and, finding nobody to help me with my manuscript, wrote a note and attaching same calling for corrections to the script and got it going. --a tempest in a teapot but one which, I am glad could be disposed of so speedily, and all due to a mere chance remark about the weather.

But no sooner did I dispose of one confusion about October dates than another headed in my direction. The artist phoned me to say her granddaughter wanted to know if I would write the Rocket to ask her if she would come to photograph the wedding. I said I would do so and asked the artist when it was to be. She said it was to be the second Sunday in October and she thought Willie Mae, the prospective bride, had said that would be on the 3rd. Realizing the artist has no concept of calendars and couldn't possibly comprehend that the second Sunday in any month could scarcely be on a 3 of anything, I got her to consult Willie Mae for additional details. She came up with October 9th at the Baptist Church in Cloutiersville, or "at least you might as well say it's in the town but it's outside, just outside, and Miss Carolyn could take the music, piano and picking, and the procession and all and after that back here at my house for the infare". Well, Lord, the Rocket seems to have quite a job cut out for herself, what with all the music and picking, not to mention the infare, and so I shall drop her a letter in duplicate, one to New Orleans, one to Shreveport, neither of which she will probably ever get, and after that Dame Fortune will have to take over. Willie Mae, according to the artist, said she rather have Miss Carolyn than anybody but if she couldn't come to let her know in time so she could get somebody else. My conclusion, stemming from that statement is that Willie Mae doesn't know the Rocket very well if she thinks she can count on her to advise her either way.

Dr. Alban of the Shreveport Experimental Station in pecaness, was here for dinner. He is quite an amateur photographer and has lots of slides of his travels. He had brought his camera today, wanting to get pictures of gourds and I think he really got some very nice ones. He says he will have slides made of them if they turn out nicely. As for myself I vegetable gardened and ought to sleep mightily tonight.....

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P.S.

Instinctively I feel the whole Castro rumpus about going to the Theresa in Harlem was cooked up in advance, the chicken cooking in a midtown hotel and other performances merely employed to get them put out and so afford an opportunity to select the Theresa, thus seeming to cultivate the African N. new members. I'll bet we shall hear something about all this eventually

Tuesday, September 20th, 1960.

Memorandum:

ur summer weather continues in the 90's although a shower in town during the late afternoon brought the thermometer down a few degrees in this area, making the temperature exceedingly pleasant tonight.

With the three ring circus going on in the Communist camps at the United Nations, Soviet Headquarters, Hotel Theresa and so on, the coast-to-coast net work news reporters seem to have lots to talk about the general subject of Manhattan high-jinks but little about anything else. I have never caught up with hurricane Florence who, I suppose, may have blown herself out to sea while not once so far this week have I heard any report as to golfing scores at Burning Tree and such like

I can't seem to think what it was that made my day so busy but busy it was and I begrudged the couple of times Armen called me to gossip. I can always tell when things get dull at the Red Cross by the number of telephones I receive from that quarter.

Today's story had to do with some sort of an anniversary which Charles unningham celebrated over the week end. Perhaps it was his birthday and perhaps it wasn't. In any event, the new wife gave Charles a half dozen lovely new shirts and in the pocket of one, tucked a check for three thousand five hundred dollars. All I can say is that Charles is unimaginative if he doesn't arrange to have bigger and more frequent anniversaries.

At the coffee hour this morning I learned of the lady doctor's domestic trials. Don, her husband, simply can't get his feet on the ground and is mooning around month in and month out. He is depressed and, naturally, makes his wife so. She sent him to vacation with some of his friends in Arizona, thinking a geographic change and relaxation with friends might help. As soon as he arrived at his destination, however, he phoned her, saying he had changed his mind and instead of staying at least one month, had decided to remain only one night. J. H. said at supper the other night he has no doubt that the lady doctor has the largest practice of anyone in this



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area. She is certainly on the jump all around the clock and it does seem lamentable that when she does touch home base, she has to be confronted with the trials and tribulations of her unemployed husband. Fortunately, however, she continues infatuated with him, in a manner somewhat like their mutual fascination over their child, Desiree. We have known others who have had the problem of having two children, one an offspring, the other the offspring's father, and I must say I feel terribly sorry for anyone confronted by such an insoluble triange, --a geometric set-up that, paradoxically enough, doesn't seem to have sufficient points to make it plausible.

Because there was no breeze stirring last night, it seems rather strange there should have been so many gourds on the ground this morning. Although they were of the larger varieties and although some of them struck the ground from a height of 8 or 10 feet, none of them were damaged. There was a green one,-- that is green in color, that I have hung up to dry by the boudoir door on the gallery. The bottom is just about the size and shape of a football, one sharp end pointing down. The opposite point is lost in the handle, about the size of your wrist and perfectly straight measuring a little over four feet. Perhaps, after it dries, I shall make a dipper out of it although what on earth anyone would try to dip with it, I cannot imagine. Perhaps, on the other hand, I shall make a rattle out of it by simply letting it remain intact so that the seeds within will eventually loosen and so make a racket but, on second thought, it would certainly take quite a big baby to manipulate a rattle the size of a football on the end of a handle of such length. Perhaps I shall merely give it to somebody like Blythe who chances to pass this way. I wish Mrs. Spinks might have it but it would require a coffin to protect such a thing, were it to be shipped.

Just before sundown, I gathered three baskets of okra and one basket of tomatoes and I shall give the major portion of this produce to local friends and still have apple for both houses. If only Lyme were

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Wednesday, September 21st, 1960.

emorandum:

Beautiful weather.

I thought today was reckoned as the beginning of autumn but I didn't hear anything bout such an event on any of the official weather reports. Perhaps Leap Year or something else has altered the September 21st time table for seasonal doings.

I am looking forward to a double dip in tomorrow's post, what with the failure of the 1st class mail to put in an appearance. Fortunately such errors as going to Melville or where ever gets set straight within 24 hours so that today's absence of delivery means a double delivery on the following day.

I recalled my post script of last night, complaining about the President's failure to be appearing on the New York stage interruption.....

I was talking about my thought that the President would have done well to make the Soviets at least share some of the Manhattan stage with him, simply by being in Manhattan, at least. And so tonight, and a little be-latedly, the same idea seems to have come to the surface in Washington and the President will indeed appear in the latter half of the week. It is regrettable he didn't make it in the first half but, perhaps, better late than never.

The interruption was from the Enterprise office, giving me the once over of tomorrow's issue. There doesn't seem to be anything extraordinary but it is said to be alright in view of what was available to sere up. It remains to be seen if there is a political wail when some readers get to the Cane ever emo under the title of "The Governor, the Queen and the Children".

The Longs are in the news again, Uncle Earl's wife having filed a will of 1955 for probate while one of Uncle Earl's sisters claims he made one last year that cannot be found. The sister is quoted as opining the



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ex-Governor left something like \$275,000., which is probably true even though he never had a salary or listed income that would have totaled such an amount even though he had never spent a nickel of it. And that, if I may say so, is not especially new by way of news in the settlement of a politician's estate.

With this week's admission of 14 new members to the UN, 13 of them African, it seems to me this is likely to be an historic season for that organization. As I recall, Red China was kept out of the UN by an almost even vote by the member nations, about 30 in favor of admission, about 30 opposed. Now that 14 new nations make their entrance into the organization, it would appear these new members may easily turn out to be the balance of power that will decide a lot of things in the future. Pretty soon, it would seem to me, it ought to dawn on Little Rock that there's a lot at stake if children of one race or another may go to school with other children in Arkansas. The trouble with die-hards is that they die hard and I suppose at least one, perhaps two generations will have to make their exit before our actions will entitle us to unbiased opinions from many a soul in the African States and, of course, it is quite possible that neither Africa nor the rest of the world will have the patience to wait for such a long time for us to get civilized. Be that as it may, there are new winds of force blowing through the corridors of the U. N. building on East River and lucky are we of the West if we find we are with the majority on matters henceforth coming before that organization. I think we have at long last realized the U. N. offers a set-up that, if properly developed, may far in bringing the globe into some sort of universal order. The growing pains will undoubtedly find lots of people balking at this possible dawn of a new day but, whether we like it or not, it is going to be difficult holding back the dawn. How we shall fare and how we shall proceed seems to be anybody's guess. Mightily I am shocked and amazed that a program appearing over all major stations in Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas and so on, under the name of Life Line, which seems to be under the patronage and apparently paid for by H. L. Hunt, one time the richest and still one of the richest men in the world, and one time angel of the late and unlamented junior Senator from Wisconsin, and the burden of these programs seems to be a denunciation of the United Nations and American membership in it. What the alternative might be is never mentioned. And so turns the world and so I must do some work and then call it a day.

10746

10746

Thursday, September 22nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Fair today, cloudy tonight, with the average temperature five or six degrees above normal, what with the day time highs still in the 90's.

I was delighted with today's post which was certainly worth waiting for in spite of my impatience with yesterday's failure of 1st class things to reach their destination although the yesterday and today combination was pleasing all around.

It goes without saying that I rejoiced that things in Lyme went off as well as they did during the recent big blow and I am so glad the independent transportation system functioned so well that little Miss Lee wasn't marooned half way between one place and another.

The fact that things are already piled higher than high on executives' desks with the inevitability that they will climb higher and higher in the weeks ahead impels me to stress again as I have stressed in the past, to wit, that until the flurry has subsided which probably means after the first of the year, I pray you not to think about personal correspondence during this busy, dizzy period. A post card occasionally, if circumstances permit, would be grand but even if post cards are out of the question, too, rest assured that I shall always understand and rely on telepathy until things are once more righted around.

I am so glad your patient has come through his ordeal, so far as the first move is concerned and I hold the thought that further moves, --much further, -- may be much closer that casualness broad would seem to suggest as a possibility.

I need not try to tell you how indebted to you I am for the quite unexpected and altogether "tingling-to-me" clipping about Marly-la-Machine. Like Porte Marly and Marly-le-Roi, Marly-la-Machine is an old geographic and historical friend. I was surprised, too, that even Louveciennes got into the article, too, and made me think again of the Fragonards in the Frick Gallery that were painted for Madame du Barry's chateau there. I never cease marveling that no newspaper article can ever seem to get into print without having a mistake or two and so it was, as you probably noticed in this instance, too. The line I refer to has



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to do with the magical date of 1679, wherein we are told that Quatorze, "tired of Versailles", etc., etc., whereas we know perfectly well that Versailles didn't have the final Quatorze seal put on it until about 1684 and that it was about 1700 before Quatorze really got to going on Marly-le-Roi although Marly-la Machine was already supplying waters for the Versailles fountains from the Seine. All of this is of no importance to the newspaper reader, of course, but it is excellent evidence of how so many newspaper accounts somehow seem to get twisted about.

And may I thank you for telling me about bread preferences on the part of a particular feathered friend. There's no accounting for such taste and I'm delighted to know about it. Perhaps I mentioned that while Grandpa doesn't care much about milk, oddly enough, but that the peacocks are crazy about it. The last thing I should have imagined would have been a peacock losing his mind over milk.

I talked with Eth tonight and she expressed the hope Sister would be coming to make her home here. Imagine. I had called her to ask if she had Carrie's telephone number. She told me Carrie doesn't have a phone but one may call the Saline post office and leave messages there for her. Of course, you and I know Carrie does have a phone. I asked the operator if she would connect me with La Mormon but the operator explained that the number is restricted from vulgar printed phone books and therefore she couldn't give it to me or connect me with Miss Mormon unless I could supply the number. Imagine. I thought I might gang up with Carrie on a price at which each of us would demand of Magazette for future articles and I should have liked to fix this price before making acknowledgement of Ola Mae's letter but I shall have to do without that knowledge.

The letters from Ola Mae, Harold Martin and Margot Wheeler speak for themselves. I shall attach my response to Ola Mae although I think I'm a fool to fool with that whole set-up, especially as I learned from the pocket that R. Byrd is quite jealous of his position of Gray Eminence and of me. Imagine.....

10748

10748

Friday, September 23rd, 1960.

Memorandum: Another perfectly lovely day without the slightest suggestion that summer has withdrawn and autumn taken over.

There seems to be lots to listen to on the radio these nights..... interruption.

The artist called. She seemed to be feeling super fine, thanks to a mild artificial stimulant. She was complaining about the impending infare for Jackie's girl and said that while she was glad to do something for her granddaughter, this new generation, unlike the old, wasn't satisfied with home made cake and had to have store bought ones, etc., etc.

She had a long rigamarole about having gone with her neighbor, Nina, when the latter wanted to have company with her in venturing to town to call on her son who was resting in jail until a doctor could examine him, prior to his departure for the hospital or asylum in Alexandria. The youth, like his mama, suffers from epilepsy and alcohol, even as on other sufferers from that affliction, does nothing to improve their condition. And so the cotton rolls and so do the bottles and so do the automobiles, carting the afflicted off to institutions. To hear the artist, herself a bit under the weather, go into the details of the visitation was really something. No wonder I lost a news program about today's doings in the U.N. meeting.

Red Calmer for CBS, used his usual phrase on his five minute newscast tonight:

"Here are the headlines of news around the world",

but tonight's world seemed to be centered exclusively on the U.N. building, the Waldorf and the Soviet headquarters.



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10749

Another interruption as I turn the page.  
I. S. Willard called to report her return to home base, following a couple of weeks in the big road around south Louisiana. She said she had found a letter awaiting her on her return, --from Aunt Willie, saying how perfectly lovely James had been to her during her Baton Rouge visit. She said she thought she would copy the sentence and send it along to Kay. I opined that I thought the idea an excellent one.

In Lake Charles she had seen those people, -- the Schaffers and they inquired after my good health. She said that she had met lots of other people while there and some of them had spoken of a very select list of people who were being invited to meet Carolyn on Sunday night, --the 25th. It was I. S. W.'s understanding that one of her films was to be shown, -- the Hodges one, perhaps.

It would be interesting to know what all this program of public appearances means. I cannot help wondering if it isn't being sponsored by somebody, perhaps Mr. Hodges.

And this reminds me to say that the letter from Ola Mae would have been quite unexpected, --the one I enclosed yesterday, since the Last Word never writes, as you so well know. But what really impelled her to pen me a line, I imagine, stemmed from the fact that when I last saw the Rocket, I told her quite frankly I wasn't going to get too far ahead with copy for the Magazine unless something concrete came up from the direction of Mr. Hodges or his representatives regarding something more substantial than an acknowledgment of manuscripts used in Hodges publications. I have no doubt the Rocket passed this along to the Last Word and accordingly the latter wrote the letter, talking about the wish of Mr. Hodges to have the one ever Memo put into wider circulation. Just how he proposes to do such a thing, I haven't the slightest idea and I doubt if he has.

We are supposed to be honored by a week end visit from Shreveport but I hold the thought it may not transpire. A postcard to J. H. remarked that the 23rd is the anniversary of her marriage and she would like to be out of town on that date. Since she was living here at the time the nuptials were celebrated in 1938, a return here to spend the anniversary ought to be quite a potent reminder of the event, I assume. Well, Lord, another week end unfolds

10750

10750

Sunday, September 25th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Pleasantly warm over the weekend with lots of banging from on high Saturday around dark but only a quarter of an inch of rain, followed by cloudy weather today and a sprinkle that has been persisting since 4:30 and it is now a little after 9.

Saturday's post brought Edith Porter's letter and this week's Life, both of which I relished. I thought the Nigeria article in Life especially interesting and I was impressed that Anne Parrish could be so soon forgotten in Danbury. Wouldn't it be interesting to know where the Goswell furniture went, with the settlement of the estate.

I am delighted to report that we did not receive a Shreveport visitation this week end and the resulting calm was pleasant indeed.

Blythe stopped in on Saturday afternoon but was returning to Alexandria right away and, in view of the weather, perhaps she was just as happy there as at camp.

She had taken a couple of gourds with her when last here and these she had been working on and so brought them back to me and they are at present resting in Ghana.

The creations she brought forth were quite different. One gourd she fashioned into a container to hold a truly Quatorzienne arrangement of dried flowers seed pods, etc., all stepped up with pine cones and heaven knows what all. It is so truly something suggested by the boiseries at Versailles and withal so classic that one would suspect Blythe of having suddenly become conscious of the 17th century, in spite of the fact that you and I know that would be quite impossible.



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The other gourd she made into a Jack-o'-Lantern, a really jolly fellow that is quite the best I have ever seen. She carved the mouth so the corners turned up in a drole manner and she carved the eyes so they look as though the lower parts were being pushed upward from sheer laughter on the part of Jack. Taking the inside of a dishrag gourd, she flattened out one end of this baloney looking thing to form a wide brim for a hat, letting the rest of the material rise up 8 inches or so above the brim, until it reached a final point in sharp contrast to the expansive visage beneath. Using Spanish moss, she made ringlets for hair and then, after dyeing cornshucks red, she used these to make a mutton-chop beard that is a knockout. In short, the Jack-o'-Lantern does what it is supposed to do, I guess, -- it makes you laugh at the sight of it.

I was glad to catch up with Invitation to Learning last night. They were doing D. H. Lawrence's Women in Love. It is always pleasant to hear civilized people talk and I thought the participants quite civilized although this Lawrence opus never appealed to me as entertainment for which it was not intended nor for instruction which I suppose it was. From what was said during the half hour, I gathered that the book is supposed to be about the ordinary, social or conventional reactions of human beings to one thing and another as opposed to primordial impulses that are also supposed to manifest themselves in people but happily, I guess, are usually held down pretty well. I'm not at all sure about primordial forces operating in me or anyone else and I shy away from such speculations much as I do when psychiatrist begin talking about babies, children and even grown-ups, yearning for the warmth and protection of the mother's womb. Personally, I have no notion as for what a tiny baby may be yearning but I suspect that whatever it is, it is not yearning for its mother's womb. But getting back to Women in Love, I must repeat what I have so often said before, -- it seems remarkable that an author cannot simply state what he is driving at in a Preface to a book and thus save all the speculation and interpretation that ultimate readers have to go through to try to discover what

10752

10752

Monday, September 26th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Two and a quarter inches of rain last night with clouds and spriles today. It's cloudy and sprinkley tonight and the promise for more of the same stuff on the morrow.

With all the rumpus going on at U. N. these days, the sound of the national political contenders seems momentarily drowned out but we shall hear them plainly enough before November 8th, no doubt.

I was especially indebted to Senor Castro when at the inception of his speech today, he assured the U. N. audience it would be brief and therefore lasted only 4 hours and 27 minutes. Had he not promised to be brief, one shudders at the possible length.

In spite of the rather unpleasant weather this morning, I coffee-ed in an aura of sunshine. Every year I somehow forget that with the end of September there will always be a sugar cane festival in New Iberia, with much parades during the day and dancing in the streets at night. J. H. will be going over to Albany, Georgia, Sunday and so one might as well get going in the direction of New Iberia along about Friday, returning late Monday in time to prepare for family coming up Tuesday to celebrate mother's birthday on Tuesday. No wonder the sun, in spite of the actual cloud coverage, was so scintillating. I must re-read a biography of Marie Antoinette to see if I understand her impulse to frolic a little better.

In the gourd section, as was to be expected, last night's rain dumped lots of gourds on the ground, doing damage to none of them although necessitating that they be transported to some place where they wouldn't be resting on soggy ground. Some of them were sufficiently matured to permit the removal of the outer skin and so hung up to dry further. I reckon I effected this transformation on about 40, one result being that the rafters on the front gallery we are so crowded with gourds suspended from on high that the place is beginning to look as eerie as illustration for a book.



10753

10753

What with the displays going on in U. N. at every meeting these days, perhaps it is no wonder that Emily Post finally expired on this date. Had she survived long enough to hear the two Presidential candidates tonight, however, I think she might have taken a new lease on life for it seemed to me that both of them performed in a manner that would have received Post approval and it seemed to me that Mr. Nixon in particular leaned over backward to give the impression that not only are we living in the best of all kinds of worlds, so far as the confines of the United States is concerned but the electorate is being given an opportunity to select as President the one man who is most likely to display good manners while in office, following his election.

Of course I have no idea as to what effect either candidate produced visually on TV watchers but as an old hand at radio listening, I got little or nothing that would have done very much to intensify anything by way of a preference that had not already been imbedded in my mind.

Before the program went on the air, some announcer opined that about ninety million people would be listening. I am willing to accept that figure and go a step farther and opine on my own hook that about forty-five million may be expected to tune in on the next joint effort on the part of the candidates. In any event, I'm glad the program lasted only one hour, making it better than Saturday night broadcasts on almost any net work when you have not one but two choices, -- solid hours either of football games or hill-billy twanging. I do a lot of scoffing at Bible slappers but on Saturday nights they do introduce a third type of entertainment, wacky to be sure but not quite so deadly as the football and yll billy business.

The truth of the matter is that in some categories, as, for example, the farm one, nobody knows the answer and each candidate is whistling in the dark. Nixon thinks our defense is just fine and Kennedy doesn't. The voter is asked to decide which is right and, of course, knows no more about it than does Grandpa. Then one candidate comes up with some percentages, 44 percent or 2 percent or 15 percent on production or cost of living or contrasting advances, and figures, of course, prove anything and everybody listening to figures spouted by a politician comprehends nothing. In short, the great seem to be as it was advertised.

10754

10754

Tuesday, September 27th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Winter came so early this year. I doubt if the thermometer got out of the 60's today under heavy cloud coverage and now and then a sprinkle which wasn't enough by way of moisture to keep the cotton pickers out of the fields this afternoon. At 8 tonight both Dallas and New Orleans were in the 70's, leaving the space of the sandwich between on the choll side.

I liked something reported on CBS tonight. A story from Regent Park reports that in that London zoo they have a goose reminding the keep of Castro. The goose, of course, loves to do a lot of splashing about but every time he gets in the tank holding the water, he invariably pulls out the stopper, leaving him high and dry.

From various quarters today, I heard reactions to the "historic" "debate" between Messrs Kennedy and Nixon last night, each person reporting having witnessed the session on TV and, of course, I was glad to learn what I, as a radio listener, missed, -- to wit, the drawn look on Mr. Nixon's face. None of the reports reaching me dealt with what was said by the two participants but what their physical appearance reflected and I suppose that is about what one might expect of potential voters' interest in candidates.

Off hand, my guess is that we have had more lawyers and military people ascending to the Presidency than any other type and somehow it has never occurred to me we might sometime get a bona fide actor but if this TV sister act continues in future campaigns, perhaps it will be a thespian, on the strength of his agility before the camera that will push a man slap into the White House.

At the post office this morning, I recalled that last year a couple of huge sacks of mail arrived, all containing Sears-Roebuck catalogues, each sack bearing the name of Elville, La., but sent here instead. For a second time within a week, there was no 1st class mail delivery at this bend of the river but there were some imposing looking sacks that bulged with stuffing which



10755

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Wednesday, September 28th, 1960.

turned out to be Sears-Roebuck catalogues, and, no doubt, remarkably enough, really intended for this community. I always receive these catalogues with pleasure for although I never get around to use them myself, lots of my friends find them convenient. I should add, however, that I am forever buying something or other from Sears-Roebuck although, instead of wading through their literary productions on my own hook, I simply phone the office in town where I am told what the listing may be and a telephone order is made out and shipped from there. My purchases are usually confined to oil paints for the artist. It seems a little odd that no commercial house in a town of 14 or 15 thousand people should carry artists' supplies but such seems to be the case. The college bookshop carries such things but that emporium is, naturally, reserved for students and teachers. I can readily enough persuade Ora to exercise her rights as a faculty member and so obtain oil paints through her good offices, but I prefer using "Mr. Sears" and thus avoid bothering Ora.

The hour approaches 10 and I find myself wondering what it was the Soviets in general and Mr. K. in particular were talking about recently, and especially last evening when it was repeated several times that today would be an historic one, apparently because of something that was to transpire behind the iron curtain. Whatever it was obviously didn't come off as anticipated for I haven't heard a peep on the radio this evening about anything extraordinary.

I was a little surprised tonight to learn that again Red China's hopes to be invited to join the United Nations had been turned down again. I had half felt China might make it this year but it is said the vote on this go-round was exactly the same as last year, -- something like 12 against, 7 in favor and one abstention.

Well, so much for this dull letter but perhaps it will be less frigid on the morrow and I may do a little better. I trust the

10756

P. S.

10756

On removing this page for placing it in the envelope, I get the impression a portion of it faded out. There was nothing of the slightest importance in that section since it merely had to do with a telephone chat with I. S. Willard....

Wednesday, September 28th, 1960.

Memorandum: Half blue, half gray were today's skies and the sunshine looked somewhat novel after our few days of shadow. It could warm up a little to be a bit more pleasant but even so it is nice enough. I'm more or less alone tonight, what with J. H. having gone to New Orleans this noon and Celeste, afraid to stay at home alone, remaining with her mama at the hospital. J. H. expects to return Thursday night and Celeste will be back Friday morning in ample time, I trust, to take off for New Iberia for the week end. At coffee this morning I heard a new excuse for going to New Iberia for the sugar cane festival. You see, when one sees mother so frequently, one is likely to get depressed and that isn't good for mother to see therefore the sugar cane festival. As for H. taking off Sunday for Georgia, I shall be alone some other nights, too, it would appear but as I have never been able to comprehend what it is that people are afraid of, I can seem to drum up much sympathy for myself. Well, I don't seem to be getting anywhere on this keyboard tonight, what with three telephone interruptions as between this paragraph and the above, and none of them of the slightest importance. As I was, nevertheless, not to hear from I. S. Willard and her adventures of the day although little Miss J. S. has probably never been known to report a single adventure without a going on and on to select another word or phrase to be used in the statement could be said to be a bit of a chatterbox. I am sure that the general trend of the day is to finish the sentence that he either forgets what it is that turned out to be blue or misses the color named but completely.

She had gone to consult with the President at the college



10757

so see what John had to say about introducing a line of  
study centering on the tie between History and Art, and  
how that turned out. I don't recall. Then she and  
Mrs. Charles Cunningham drove down to Beaufort to have  
mid morning coffee with Beth and Beth said that she  
is for Nixon and Vernon is for Kennedy, and finally, after  
I. S. W. and Mrs. C. M. C. were back in town and were saying  
"Adieu" to each other, I. S. W., in parting, said:

"Give my love to Charles."

which produced a surprise look on the new wife's face.

But what I. S. W. had to say that interested me had  
to do with a colored lady who had been brought up in a  
white home by conservative people in town. Somehow, with  
the passage of the years, a home was bought for the girl  
near the people who had brought her up and, the man  
of the house, having died a few years ago, the girl, having  
her own home, is there only during the day as she always spend the  
night with her former mistress who is old and doesn't want to  
feel isolated from the world. She, the girl, who is  
perhaps middle age but now, occasionally invites white people  
to dine or sup at her home, she always doing the serving and  
never joining them at the table, reminding me of May  
Balthazar who paractices the same sort of social legerdemain.  
I. S. W. had been there recently and told me of the pretty things  
the girl has in her house and, fortunately, spoke of  
her delight in collecting pitchers, for I have a pretty  
little pitcher that most certainly be added to this collection  
and I shall give it to her if I. S. W. brings her this way one day.  
On second thought, however, I think I shall send the pitcher  
to I. S. W. to pass along for I think a gift to a collector  
from someone entirely unknown would be much nicer. That's  
what I like about I. S. Willard, --she may wear you out  
by all the side paths she may lead you into, --even  
worse, I believe than Edith Wyatt Moore, --but if  
you can survive the detours, you are likely to stumble over  
a delightful vista you might not have dreamed exists, providing  
you have the patience to persist.

Today I gardened and tonight I am pleasantly  
weary but withal the happier for this nightly  
communion.....

10758

Thursday, September 29th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A perfectly beautiful day such as is likely  
to be encountered and experienced only when October  
comes in September.

Thelma Kyser called me this morning to say she  
was sorry not to see me among the 600 guests at  
the faculty reception at their house one night this  
week, perhaps Tuesday. She mentioned something about  
a special invitation that had been directed to me but  
I never got that and would have sent my regrets  
anyway. The President's house, while ample for average  
size receptions certainly wasn't designed to accommodate  
six hundred people. I guess it may have one advantage,  
however, that ability it provides for one to get lost  
in a crush of people.

Mrs. Walker had reported to me that Thelma had  
made some truly grand flower arrangements and that  
the food she served was really excellent which seemed to  
come as something of a surprise. I reported the  
Walker delight with the flowers and food to Thelma who  
beamed over the phone that perhaps this was so  
in Mrs. Walker's mind because she, Thelma and I probably  
had about the same concept of values. I must remember to  
pass that along to Mrs. Walker sometime for I think  
she will experience quite a turn in being classified in a trinity  
of embracing herself, Thelma and me. I admire both  
ladies for their manifest virtues but as each is  
possessed of sterling attributes that couldn't possibly  
be dubbed identical that I find Thelma's glib classification  
quite hilarious.

Thelma wants to come down to tell me all about  
the adventures she and John experienced in their European  
jaunt. I expressed delight at the prospect of her  
threatened visit but she explained that this week end  
she is giving a reception for Father Wilson of the  
episcopal church who is leaving in October and the  
following week is something else and the next week will be  
pilgrimage, etc., etc., and I suggested 1961 or  
1962 would suit me.



10759

10759

The artist 'phoned me this noon, asking  
"is you got any yellow paint, it makes a  
picture look so pretty and if you ain't, is you got  
any extra gumbo?"

Naturally I was delighted with the laternative  
but for the moment, I couldn't quite see  
substituting on a canvas any gumbo I have ever  
experienced for yellow paint.

In a moment, however, I recalled that  
because the association is so intimate, very often  
plantation lesser folk often use inter-  
changeably the words gumbo and okra, the  
latter so generally used in making  
gumbo. I was sorry about the absence of any  
yellow paint but I hazarded the guess that okra  
might be available, as, indeed, it turned out  
to be. That seemed to make the artist very happy  
and I have no doubt she is busy tonight in  
either stirring up a painting or a plate of gumbo  
or, perhaps, both, and, for all I know, with identical  
ingredients.

Among other things, today's post brought  
an inquiry about the availability of small, ornamental  
gourds from a Mrs. Wells of Jackson, Mississippi. In  
her letter of inquiry, and for what reason, I know not,  
she enclosed the colorful front page of the Times  
Picayune Dixie Roto magazine of a couple of years  
ago, showing gourds from the local vines. I shall  
return her cover illustration to her with my  
regrets about having no small ornamental gourds this  
yet but shall enclose a Market Bulletin coming to  
hand by the same post and I suppose that may well have  
listings of people who specialize in the raising of  
the merchandise the lady desires. I shall confess to  
the aforesaid Mrs. Wells that I do have large  
gourds that might be classed as ornamental but as  
they weigh from fifteen to twenty pounds each,  
they probably wouldn't be very economic, in view of present  
transportation costs, to fiddle much with when considering  
the zone differences as between Cane River and Jackson.

Tonight is so lovely, the moon so bright and mellow, I am  
going to saunter over to Ghana and let my mental  
telepathy do a little overtime.....

10760

10760

Friday, September 30th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Our beautiful weather continues but how  
swiftly has September run out.

Occasionally, like everyone else, I suppose, I feel  
a degree of satisfaction at all that has been accomplished  
within the waking hours. At other times, one feels  
just the opposite and that's the way I feel tonight.  
I seem to have been spinning around all day like a  
whirling dervish and achieved nothing. I comfort my  
feelings by trying to kid myself into believing there may have  
been some tag ends taken care of that present other days  
in more rosey lights.

There was a call from one of the State Departments  
in Baton Rouge asking the prize of zannie questions:

Was Carolyn Ramsey here and, if not, could I say  
where she might be found?

My answer was another question: Who can tell?

This was followed by another call, indirectly from  
the Welfare Department, reporting that it considered  
"The Governor, the Queen The Children" the best thing  
thus far written on the subject touched on in that  
column.

Later in the day, Joan Frantz remarked on encountering  
me that she had a bone to pick with me since she felt it  
was terrible that I should write anything like  
last week's column about "The Governor and the Queen and  
the Children". She said if I had to pay taxes, I would  
sing a different tune. I blandly told her that  
since I didn't pay taxes either, I proposed remaining on  
his side.

Carmen call this afternoon to say that Jack and Ann Britton  
have a daughter, prematurely born but healthy. Jack had  
recently taken out some insurance that made a big premium  
difference if there were an extra member in his family  
prior to September 1st when the thing went into effect and  
the prematurity spelled out financial loss on that one.



10761

Blythe, Joan, some other Alexandria lady and another lady from Tampa, Florida, arrived unannounced this afternoon, unable to linger long as they had a cocktail party awaiting them in Alexandria. They had driven up here right after dinner to show the Tampa lady who lives in an ante bellum home there how Melrose looked. They did not go to the camp.

I asked the lady if Sarasota and Tampa were near each other and she opined about 45 miles. She said she had been up there only last week to view some treasures in the Ringling Museum which, as I understand it, is a good one. I asked her if she could tell me something about the home Mrs. Potter Palmer had owned there. She said she could and that it was a beautiful place and, although there was much other chatter going on, I believe she said some of the Cantacuzenes lived there. She said she supposed I knew that Mrs. Potter Palmer's daughter had married Prince Cantacuzene. I told her frankly that I didn't know Mrs. Potter Palmer had ever had a daughter, supposing the two boys, Honore and Potter, Jr., to be her only children. She responded, kindly but positively that she thought everybody knew that Mrs. Palmer's daughter, Nellie Grant, had married Prince Cantacuzene. I said I knew that Mrs. Palmer had married but once and I had always supposed Nellie Grant to be indeed a Grant and a niece of Mrs. Potter Palmer and she said that she was sure that Nellie Grant was a daughter or a niece or something of Mrs. Potter Palmer and that ended that. The Nellie Grant relationship somehow got into a better perspective but I never did find out who put the pot in Potter Palmer tempest in a tea pot.

And now I must up and away to the home of # John Conant, a mile up the Bermuda road for they will be waking him tonight and I have always considered him one of the finest people I knew. His great grandmother was Suzanne Metoyer, twin sister of Grandpere Augustin, the lady of color who owned more slaves than any other woman in Louisiana. Suzanne, like Grandpere, had a grandfather's clock, the works identical to those in the one here in my bedroom, the case slightly taller. I think it nice the twins had twin clocks.....

10762

Sunday, October 2nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Our beautiful Indian Summer weather lingers on.

The weekend was hurly-burly but happy withal.

With Celeste in New Iberia for the dancing in the streets, J. H. dined with us at the big house on Saturday, and I always like it when he graces the board.

On Saturday afternoon along about 2, while I was busily contending with gourds on the front gallery at Yucca, the honk of a human assailed my ears and Sister blew in unannounced. We talked for an hour and, as she was sober, it went along pleasantly enough. After that she visited the store and then went to the house across the fence where she must have sampled some of Celeste's liquor, returning here quite high, talking raucously and, ten minutes before supper, suggesting we have a couple of cups of coffee. I thought she needed about four at least and she did take several with obvious results in the sedation department. Supper followed and as the clerk arose from table, I arose, too, intent on feeding the dog next door, leaving J. H. and Sister at table and I saw her no more. I fancy she returned to Shreveport this morning.

I always find myself exhausted after hearing Sister go into one of her acts and so, after reading a page or two from Margaret Kennedy's Outlaws on Olympus, I folded up my beard about 9:30 and fell asleep forthwith. About 11, however, I was awakened by the telephone. Miss Clark, the English girl studying Agriculture, who was here last Spring, had supped with the Walkers. Miss Clark is being courted by a youth who lives on his coffee plantation, seven miles from Nairobi, in Kenya colony. He had come over from Africa to see Miss Clark, perhaps in mid summer when she was in Missouri, and together they traveled to Alberta province, Canada, and then down the West Coast to Mexico and thence back here. She had told him her impressions of Melrose and both wanted to visit it although time was running out.



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The fiance had to be in school on Monday morning and as his graduate work is being carried out in London, it was a question of visiting Melrose and then driving someplace to catch a plane so that he would be back in England tonight to get rigged up for classes on the morrow. Sometimes a child of the 19th century finds this 20th one so odd.

But the moon was bright, the night so lovely and I bid the youngsters come, meeting them at the front gate, admonishing silence until we had negotiated the front gardens, what with Sister in the big house and Dr. Alban sleeping there, too, Dr. Alban planning to accompany J. H. this morning to Albany, Georgia.

And so we three had a lovely time at Yucca, the African House and hana, and a little after midnight, they departed, entranced with their Cane River interlude that somehow seemed to promise them both a glimpse of what their years ahead may be when the youth takes the maiden as his bride to Kenya.

I cannot help wondering if the youth will have the Melrose moonbeams out of his perruque, --last night's moonbeams when tomorrow morning, he opens his school books in London.

With all the racket going on here Saturday afternoon, the clerk forgot to provide the cook with something for my Sunday dinner and supper. As luck would have it, Blythe and Joan drove up this morning and, stopping at the artist's, asked her to phone me, inviting me to dine with them at the camp which I did and it was so pleasant beneath the oaks, and only little Miss Lee can understand the more vital reasons. As I had people coming at 2:30, I returned here sooner than I might have, it was so pleasant on the margin of the river at the camp. About 5, tonight, the artist called again, saying Blythe had left a package for me at her house and that she was bringing it to me. I met the artist half way and discovered Blythe had prepared me a grand supper before heading for Alexandria.

Saturday afternoon's visitation knocked out secretarial assistance, leaving me with letters from Aunt Willie, James, Nina, McInnis and the Schaeffers unread. I liked Saturday night's invitation to Learning, a discussion of a couple of Plato items, and I was impressed by E. R. Murrow's report this noon on the depression in which the country is said to be experiencing mild vapors at the moment, and about which I have heard little from other quarters.

So endeth and begineth a week end and may there have been elements of satisfaction at Lyme.....

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Monday, October 3rd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Another lovely day.

In spite of the services of a couple of secretaries, I didn't get around to read too much of my mail, especially the hand written items. The first half of Aunt Willie's communication was explored but as it contained accounts of her local surroundings and was difficult for my helpers to wade through, I put it aside for the typed things.

The letter from the Rocket was unexpected. What impells her to pass this way on Sunday, of course, is the desire to film the wedding for her film, temporarily styled The orld of Clementine Hunter. A few black and white photos of the scene for the bride seems to me as reasonable as cost as one could hope for in such an undertaking. Doreatha tells me the bride's dress cost one hundred dollars and the brides maids will all wear the same type of costume, even as the more spiffy brides maids do. This seems quite a gesture in a family in which the bride's mother is on relief and the bride prides herself on knowing nothing about cooking or sewing and is to become a housewife to a poor you laboring on a farm somewhere below Cloutierville down Monette's Ferry way. It's a striking fact that none of the children or grandchildren of the artist are industrious, having taken nothing from a relative who works so hard as does little Miss Hunter.

A phone call from Mobile indicates J. H. is spending his birthday in the big road on his return from Albany, Georgia. As he is traveling by car, I cannot figure out what makes such a trip worth while in view of the scant amount of time expended on whatever the pecane meeting may be about. After all, he left here Sunday morning and drove at least 600 miles, picking up Dr. John Cox in Baton Rouge along the way. I reckon they couldn't have reached Albany before dark and next day they were already on their way back, having reached Mobile. I believe Celeste must have taken courage in both hands and decided to stay at Melrose tonight, for I notice many lights on over there. Perhaps she brought a girl friendhome with her. I suppose she probab y would have



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remained in town, had it not been a fact that tomorrow is Madam Regard's birthday and there will be kin folks coming here, en route to town, and probably there will be much feasting, etc., etc.

I haven't heard bout how the dancing in the streets turned out This noon, just as I turned on my radio to see what was going on in the world, --I had missed the morning news, Celeste called me from her house. She had just reached home, she explained, and Father somebody from Montgomery had driven in just after her, bringing his papa and mama from Detroit, asking me if I would ake over the amenities. I would. She said she simply had to rush on to town to see how mother was doing. A servant of the local household, finding himself at the "atchitoches hospital yesterday to call on a relative, dropped in to see Madam Regard and found her quite chipper

The letter from James, as of Wednesday last past, suggests, through omission of any reference to his patient, that all rocks along much as usual in that quarter.

The night is so lovely, I think I shall take a little turn in the gardens, passing by but not pausing at the house across the fence to see that all is quiet, after which I shall park on a pink bench in the hana garden. It is so pleasant to contemplate a peaceful universe from such a vantage point where all the racket of a noisy world is out of mind.

It wouldn't do me any harm to think up somet ing for next week's column which I ought to get in tomorrow's post "Spain along the Cane" seems to be a title I should like to develope. Perhaps the pink bench and the operation of my telephathy with Lyme may inspire something.

Dirie Roto on Sunday had an account of the new Royal Orleans hotel opening in the Crescent City. I am getting a copy which will send along in a day or two, thinking you might enjoy seeing the latest twist in caravanseries down yonder. The Edgar B. Sterns had much to do about getting the project going. Boyd Cruise whom I first met when in New Orleans in 1938, did the murals. It's a place I should like to see if and when I ever venture that far afield.....

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Tuesday, October 4th, 1960.

emorandum:

Ideq continues as the word for the weather.

J. H. and Dr. Alban returned this afternoon. Their trip in mileage added up to 1,400 miles from here to Georgia and back but Dr. Alban had to drive another hundred before reaching his Shreveport home tonight.

At coffe this morning, I learned all about the weekend down New Iberia way. Everything was darling. The lady was feeling a little on the noble side, too, what with having spent last night at home alone, following her return from home. There may and there may not be a slight over-tone of hope that it will eventually dawn on me that I might offer to spend my nights across the fence when J. H. isn't at home I could be wrong but my guess is that both husband and wife would congratulate themselves on their luck, should I volunteer such a service. I can understand the satisfaction the husband would experience in realizing his wife was enjoying companionship during his absences which, for all I know, might thereby well increase in number. Having everything she wants that money can buy, the wife, too, would be happy to know she could obtain some extra attention gratis. As for my selfish self, I shall continue on the theory that I may be called upon at any time for anything but in this particular instance of being subject to call any old number of nights in the week to spend my nights in such a manner, I shall never refer to such a possibility so long as there are ample funds to employ companions and unnumbered girl friends of kindred social enthusiasms on whom the wife may lounge or entertain. Accordingly, when nobility is trotted out to be admired, I shall admire it and continue playing my role of numb-skull about offering to forsake Yucca for the house across the fence nightly.



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As I turned this page,, Jove tossed a thunder-bolt at a pecane tree or something or other hard by and I jumped even as Grandpa jumped the day the bottle of coke suddenly exploded right next to him on the doorstep. As I recall, Grandpa ended up by having kittens forthwith but I doubt if I shall experience a miscarriage although the crash was unexpected, what with the pale blue sky I left above me when I came in at twilight.

I had a couple of Hunter canvases drying on the back gallery and I dashed out to rescue them and was impressed by the frequency of the lightning. It is now pouring and I am glad for this means there will be no cotton picking in the morning, in consequence whereof I shall have a few strong arms and backs to assist in moving some stuff around in preparation for new year's planting.

I finished Margaret Kennedy's Outlaws on Olympus last night and found it an excellent essay on theories about novels and how novels should be written. The title of the book certainly doesn't signify anything as to the contents. I believe it was given this title because the Greeks failed to assign any particule niche to novels when they handed out special places and guardian spirits for other forms of Art such as music, history, painting, poetry and I must say I am delighted to have had this opportunity to read this Kennedy essay but, for the life of me, I cannot imagine the Library of Congress ever recording an essay on novel writing when so many other things of wider interest are crying to be taped or waxed.

And speaking of books, I wish somebody would do a nice fat vol on Rockefeller philanthropies under John D. junior, with special emphasis on parks and buildings and the fine Arts. Of course, a single effort from the long list would call for a volume in itself, as, for example, Williamsburg or the Cloisters, the La Rochefoucauld territories. My thought is that while the people who participated in the endless aspects of any one of these objects could throw so much interesting data could contribute such invaluable information that otherwise will van sh with time if not caught and preserved in print right away I guess I had better write a letter to that lady who did The Proud Possessors for it seems to me she would be just the one to try her hand at such a monumental work.....

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Wednesday, October 5th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A lovely rain last night and drizzle and more rain all day. Total: three and three-tenth inches. It continues warm in spite of the rain and we are promised like conditions for the morrow.

At coffee I received details of Madam Regard's birthday party at the hospital yesterday. There was first of all a perfectly lovely card and message from Lyme which seems to have been vastly appreciated. In the afternoon, the relatives from around Mansura spent a couple of hours at the hospital. Later Hatchitoches friends dropped in and after that many of the hospital staff, embracing not only the nurses but the orderlies and even the janitor, for everyone, of course, loves the lady celebrating her natal day. I gather she had a really wonderful time and I want to salute little Miss Lee for having added to the sunshine in such a timely fashion in spite of the fact that time at present in the life of little Miss Lee is something providing little opportunity to glance in any direction, what with the nose to the grindstone so unendingly at this particular season.

The ains of last night and today, of course, tumbled many a gourd from the vine and while I was waiting for the dew to cease descending, I undertook an experiment which may or may not bring about results that may be of interest to readers of the Gourd Society's bulletin. As you know, when average and large size gourds are in the process of drying, it is imperative to remove the outer skin of the gourd, a gourd having three deparate layers. This outer layer seems to be composed of a texture not unlike a heavy film that is probably invaluable to the gourd in keeping out moisture. By the same token, it seems to have the property of keeping moisture inside the gourds, and often if atmospheric conditions aren't favorable, this outer skin begins decomposing and if it isn't removed, the whole gourd is likely to rot. If the gourd having its outer skin removed is a light cream or white,, the under layer, when exposed to the air, turns a dark cream color or even, in some instances, a brown.



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When the skin of the green gourd it removed, the next layer is cream color and usually turns to a deep brown. My thought was that if portions only of the outer skin were removed, the exposed sections would assume their new coloring and hold it for two or three weeks in advance of the other sections until the covering of the latter had finally got around to divest the original skin and the coloring of these places, exposed to the air at some later date, would provide a sufficient difference as to make the separate sections of treatment noticeable. I accordingly removed the outer skin only partially, about three fourths of the surface of the gourd being thus exposed to provide the ventilation to assist in the curing. I left on the other quart, not in a solid band but in stripes, allowing for air to penetrate all around, but at the same time, leaving sections of the outer skin untouched and in a design approximating marking such as appear on the small ornamental gourds. I shall be curious to see what, if anything happens. Perhaps when the balance of the skin is removed, the layer beneath will immediately take on the same tone as the major portion of the gourd that will have had a few weeks to get ahead of the section exposed to the air later. Perhaps not. That is what I am experimenting to find out, and if the difference in shading is maintained, the opportunities for decorating gourds in any fashion one may care to, will, of course, be limitless.

Reverting to the coffee hour, I must confess I could see Celeste's reason for being provoked on one score. Last Saturday night Sister slept at J. H.'s and during the night or before her departure on Sunday morning, following J. H.'s departure for Georgia, she left a lighted cigarette on the windowsill in Madam Regard's room, the whole cigarette burning out but, fortunately, running only the paint and not burning the house down.

And now for a bit of desk work and thence to an early

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Thursday, October 6th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A pretty day although pretty damp under foot. Tonight there seems to be lots of thundering going on but only a sprinkle or two has resulted thus far.

There seems to be quite a batch of mail for enclosure but I think none of it is of much interest. I am glad, of course, that Aunt Willie doesn't seem to have deviated much from her last favorable impression of James and may the good work go on.

Nina speaks of the long interim since last she heard from me. I have had the impulse to write her now and then but couldn't remember her new address until Sister gave it to me, asking me to send her a root of butterfly lily which she had offered to send from Shreveport but which Nina had declined, saying she regarded one from Melrose as having much more sentimental value for her garden.

Because of yesterday's dews and damps, a flock of field hands were sent me this morning and I put them to work but it wasn't long before they began sending for one and another so that the force was considerably reduced by 9 o'clock. They have a bad habit of sending someone to summon this or that worker without advising me so that at any given moment I may have a dozen men at work or none at all without realizing it unless I am in their midst.

I was especially glad to have Phil Johnson to do so odds and ends, including the putting on of a coat of shellac around the Yucca frieze, long overdue. There was a lot of other carpentry and shellac work to be attended to and he achieved much.

This noon I thought I caught the odor of gas but could locate no leak. I sent to the store to get a worker in utilities and an inspection was made but



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nobody but one worker agreed with me that there was the faintest aroma of any gas in the air. Half an hour later I discovered a gallon can containing gasoline on the front gallery. Phil had brought it just before noon to wash some brushes, leaving the top off the can. As the opening was from 8 to 10 inches in diameter and the stuff was evaporating normally, I concluded that this was what I imagined to be gas fumes which, indeed, it was, and I'm glad nobody tossed away a cigarette to land in a can of that stuff.

At supper tonight, everybody was mildly surprised to see Lloyd stroll in, having just arrived from Florida in his fancy sports car. When J. H. seemed surprised to see him back, Lloyd seemed equally surprised at his uncle's surprise and pointed out that he had kept his Miami job for a little more than two weeks which seems to be quite a record in Lloyd's mind for keeping the same job. I have no idea if he is spending the night here or not. But no matter where he goes, -- probably home, he probably will not "stay put" long. What a fine rolling stone he is turning out to be.

I was glad to hear Kay's Aunt Ida Chapman is coming to Matchitoches to visit her Cousin, Ruth Pierson. Perhaps it was Aunt Ida for whom little Iss Lee once rendered a service. Although James perhaps thought he was indicating how Aunt Ida is cousin to Ruth Pierson but I still don't understand and it doesn't matter at all. He does mention that Aunt Ida's maiden name was Millings and it is true that Ruth has a son named Millings Pierson but that doesn't throw much light on the family tree. As you know, Ruth is Madam Beaufort's half sister, both of them having been daughters but by different mothers of old Williams. It has been too long since I have seen Ruth and I am hoping she may come down with Cousin Ida on Monday. I shall call Ruth to see about this.

It seems to me there was something other of interest I had to report but whatever it was eludes me and so I shall let this slide for now.....

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Friday, October 7th, 1960.

Memorandum: 100 100000, 1000000

The weather can't seem to make up its mind. There was a sprinkle last night. Result: I got a lot of field hands this morning, masquerading as gardeners. I put them to work and an hour later the sun came out and automatically the store absorbed all of them, waving them off to the cotton fields where the first sunbeams had just penetrated through the clouds. Within the hour it rained enough to knock all the cotton pickers out of the fields for the balance of this week. This afternoon I got another flock of pseudo gardeners. Net result: I got most of the fading plants out of the Ghana parterres and the ground thoroughly cleared of any remaining weeds and grass. Tonight the clouds are heavy and I shouldn't be surprised if it rained.

I listened to Alexandria news at 12:15 this noon. I was astonished at one item: -- Maude Patterson, about 80, was found sometime during the morning in a closet of her home where she had committed suicide by shooting herself. Suicides by 80 year oldsters seem so rare.

Perhaps but probably not, I shall write a column on the lady as a prize example of various people all of us must know who seem to have everything -- an nothing.

Around 2:30, Blythe and Joan stopped by for a little chat. -- primarily, I suppose, to tell me about Maude's death. Blythe said her children and grandchildren were very fond of Maude, who, come to think of it, preferred to have her name spelled without the e at the end of it. Blythe said Ed Rand passed by the house in mid morning after hearing the news and shed tears. As Ed Rand is not the type to shed tears, I was impressed by this report. Come to think of it, I guess I could shed tears over Maude, too, as anyone with any feeling might shed tears over the death of any human being but, in that case, I wouldn't be weeping over Maude except as another of one of God's children. In Maude's case, I know I am guilty of impatience and sympathy. How much any human being is responsible for his actions, I haven't the slightest idea. It would be a pity if I had.

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appear to me that some people cannot be blamed at bridge if they are dealt thirteen spades and, by some miracle, fail to win the hand. Perhaps that miracle is a distinction and was especially Maud's. She seemed to have everything, a quick mind, physical attractiveness, lots of money, a comfortable, one might say even an elegant house, scores of acquaintances and, for all I know, plenty of friends. She could tell a story, depending on dialect, as well as anyone I know. She always, I believe, feared losing friends and clutched them so tightly succeeded in divesting herself of many of them. I insulted her twice, once for which I am ashamed and laughed off as a joke at the time. At a dinner at the Hand's one day, she was rattling off some tale or other and explained in the mindst of it that whereas somebody had had this and that to say, "I, responding, said nothing", to which I countered: "Just when was that....."

The other time I was unkind to her was two years ago come next Friday, when she had the nerve to call me from Alexandria to ask if she could bring some people here that afternoon and I replied negatively because I was worn out and would be more so as the day progressed, trying to get the place ready for the Pilgrimage that opened on the following day. She came and brought her guests anyway and she found out then and there I didn't like her lack of consideration. Later I wrote a couple of notes to her when she was having some physical difficulty and at the time she expressed her appreciation to a mutual friend but I never heard from her directly again.

Well, Blythe came up to bring a wedding gift to Sunday's bride and to tell me she would not be able to get up this week end. Perhaps Maud's funeral may be one reason but I suspect it is because Carolyn is supposed to be here for the wedding and Blythe doesn't like her. Next Thursday she goes to Hatcher to have luncheon with Joe Evans, the latter's daughter, la Applegate, Mary Lambdin, Miss Myra and so on. I shall be interested in hearing about that, especially how she finds Miss Myra.

I heard the last half of the "great debate" earlier this evening and shall hear the first half at 10 o'clock. What I heard sounded more lively than the first one and I thought both candidates seemed to make points about evenly. From what the commentator said, they both appeared to TV audiences as being equally pretty. How sad when the voters have to play the role of Atalanta or the suitors of Atalanta of golden apple fame....

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Sunday, October 9th, 1960.

Memorandum:

After a week of so much cloudiness, the blue sky and sunshine of both yesterday and today seem unusually redolent with the joy of life. It is pleasant to report that the Shreveport contingent changed its mind and decided not to put in an appearance.

I was happy to have a flock of strong arms to do a flock of odd and end jobs on Saturday morning but not too entranced to discover, on returning from coffee, that their will to please and some inexplicable impulse to labor mightily had impelled them to stir up the ground in all the parterres of Ghana, making the good earth look so fresh and rich, and more intent on making an excellent showing than a regard for what their hoes were stirring, almost all of my winter garden had been turned over, too, --lettuce, turnips, beets, collards and such like. The place somehow reminded me of houses I have known that are so meticulously scrubbed and tidied that all feeling of home is eradicated but neatness and cleanliness are painfully evident in every corner.

On Saturday night I ran up on Invitation to learning not once but twice, once at 6:30 and again at 9:30. They were doing Goethe's Faust which has always impressed me enormously although it was said that English and French rendition have never been successful in giving the true value to the original German. There was something about the tempo of the discussion that tended to lull me to sleep but I think, thanks to the double dip, I got most of it. From what was said, I gathered that one must keep in mind the Introduction and the Redemption that follows if one is really interested in gaining the full import of the play itself. I seem to remember the Introduction well enough but I don't remember ever having gone all through the Redemption. I hope you may be lucky enough to hear the broadcast and thus be able to set me straight on some of the points I have missed while my head nodded. On Friday night I. S. Willard called, --or rather, I.



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guess it may have been Saturday night. Anyway, she had attended the Ramsey symposium at the Monteleon and found it to her liking. David and June Prudhomme Nixon who own the house across from Lyle's on Madison Street, were also present. David now has a cat orchestra, all fitted out in red and gold uniforms, which is said to be excellent. I think they will be on TV tomorrow over WWL, New Orleans. I. S. W. said she had chatted with the Rocket who asked her to tell me she would see me on Sunday.

And sure enough, on Sunday about 2 the Rocket announced her presence in Hachitoches. She came here and we got down to Cloutierville at 2:30, and the cameras trained on the Church where the artist's granddaughter was to be wed at 3. It's a pretty church and just sufficiently at the beginning of a curve in the road so one could get a good shot at it in spite of the cars. The bridal party was filmed and on our way back here, we stopped and got some good shots both in color and black and white of the Blessed Martin gate at the entrance to the cotton fields on Magnolia. When we came directly here, parked the car beside the house next door and walked over to the artist's house with the cameras where we got pictures of the bride, groom and grandmother around the wedding cake, etc., etc.

As the Rocket wanted to be in Baton Rouge early Monday morning, she headed out right after the infare pictures. I rode with her as far as the Church where I wanted to patronize the fair, the Rocket not descending from her horseless carriage but continuing on her way southward. I was a little early for the full surge of people and saw few I knew although I was delighted at the opportunity to chat a little with Lucille Prudhomme to whom I had written a short time back that I would be with her at Oakland on next Saturday afternoon. She had her granddaughters with her, --twins of about 3, and as bright as buttons.

I sampled the gumbo and brought some meat pies back with me. J. H. and Celeste just happened to be coming in from town as I reached the front of the store and so I chatted with them while they ate meat pies and that was that. All in all, it

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Monday, October 10th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Lovely October weather.

The Country Club is making preparations for some autumnal decorating. A few days ago I was called upon to contribute some small ornamental gourds. From this I gather members of the Country Club don't spend their time raising ornamental gourds. I spent my time trying to do just that this year but as I did not succeed, it is evident the Country Club members were smarter than I and lost no time in such an unsuccessful pursuit.

I passed along the news that I had no small ornamental gourds and so, over the coffee cups this morning, mine hostess confided that the Club, in lieu of small gourds, would love some big ones and that as she was planning to spend the day at cards there on the morrow, she would be delighted to offer her fine Cadillac for transportation if I would cooperate with the club. I thought the word, -- cooperate, -- a little odd under the circumstances but I am delighted to give the rich time-killers all the big gourds they want and I shall accordingly send a load. Of course none of the staff at the Country Club will have the slightest notion as to how gourds should be handled to preserve them from decomposition and decomposition will set in soon enough but that is going to be their worry, not mine.

Over the same coffee cups, Celeste asked me if I had advised the Association for the Preservation of Historical Ladies that I had no small ornamental gourds. She added that she knew one of the chairman had been instructed to communicate with me on the subject. I said I had not informed the ladies about anything inasmuch as I hadn't heard from anyone regarding their interest in the matter. During the past couple of years, I



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have supplied tons of gourds for the ladies at the Lemee House but have never been informed by anyone if they turned out to be saleable. Celeste thought it odd I had never received any acknowledgement for my contribution which had proven so successful financially for the Association. He asked if anybody had contacted me about cook books. Nobody had. The ladies are curious about such details, it would appear. From what I have observed during Pilgrimage here, people are even more avid for big gourds than small ones but that is only one man's observation. I have enough large gourds to fill up the Lemee House and still have ample reserves to fill it again but I am not bothering to push the gourds at the ladies for there will be enough people passing this way during the year who will appreciate them as gifts and if the ladies don't appreciate them as gifts en masse, perhaps their distribution in dribblets from this point of origin will be just as satisfactory all a round. All I know is that for the first time in five or six years, I am much less busy in 1960 during this second week of October than I can recall and I'm enjoying it.

Coincidentally, I. S. Willard just called and fell to talking about gourds. The head of the Art Department at the college has suggested that her house would be enhanced in beauty if she had some gourds running along one side of it. Needless to say, Melrose gourds will supply that note. I. S. Willard is re-furbishing the basement of her house, about 24 by 14 feet, having already painted it a cream color and currently installing some bits of one thing and another with a view to making a private little gallery. I like that idea, too, and can supply some shows if she needs any. She said, regarding the Ramsey-David Nixon meeting in New Orleans that while CBS or somebody is doing the cat orchestra in black and white for TV, Carolyn is being urged by David to do a film on the same subject and Carolyn suggests it be done in color and highly suitable thereby for presentations to clubs, schools, etc. I am content to skirt the edges of that combination but it will be interesting to observe, should anything

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Tuesday, October 11th, 1960.

Memorandum:

The lovely weather continues. The enclosed letter from Essae Mae speaks for itself. Where Aunt Maude Chambers got the idea about the Minstrel letters, I wouldn't know. I first saw the so-called Minstrel in the St. Charles hotel in 1938, and so far as I know, it never was at Melrose. It was a doll about a foot or two in height, as I recall, and certainly was never called a minstrel by Lyle for, if it is what I think it is, it is simply a clever figure of a colored man as costumed for a minstrel show. I shall write Essae Mae that I know nothing about any Minstrel letters and never in my life heard Lyle mention anything of the sort. Essae Mae is mistaken about a book by Lyle's mother who certainly never wrote a book. What she refers to, I suppose, is Lyle's grandmother, Elizabeth Lyle Saron. I rather suspect Essae Mae has forgotten her name and I shall not set it forth in my letter to her. As for the book in question, I assume it is somewhere in the library but I know not where, as I did not find it when looking for it a few years back when Essae Mae asked about it..

Colonel Morris of the Ola Mae staff came to see me this afternoon, bringing a couple of copies of the current October magazine which I shall send under separate cover. I think the picture of the Lemee House quite pretty. Carmen called me to say she had received some copies and would send me some and I shall send these out to various correspondents.

About 7:30 this evening, there was a call from Bay St. Louis which, as I recall, is on the Gulf, somewhere between New Orleans and Biloxi. It was from the Rocket, saying she would be up this way early on Friday to get some shots of the artist,



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and would spend the day here, going on to Hodges Gardens where she is expected by Saturday noon and thence to Waco, I guess, and then on to the Linden Johnsons ranch with Helen for Monday or Tuesday. Tonight the radio spoke of the Johnsons as being in South Carolina on a whistle stop tour but that, I am sure, will not prevent Ladybird from being at their Texas ranch or any other place on earth within the next few days. The Rocket said she had invited Ladybird to stop over in New Orleans with her this Friday but I know not how this would work in with the other schedule. Colonel Morris today said he had talked to Carolyn about slowing down on the theory that if she didn't voluntarily, God might apply the brakes, at least that was the idea although expressed differently, and, if you don't mind, that was certainly singing psalms to a dead mule.

I. S. Willard just called to say she had dropped by the Country Club for a few minutes and had seen the gourds Celeste had taken out there this morning and that they really did look pretty. Then she got to laughing and I had to ask her to repeat. It seems that what she had not done was to notice about the color scheme in the place about which I had asked her before selecting the gourds for the place and she found it odd that following my inquiry to which she could not give an answer, she had this day visited the place, been impressed by the somewhat titanic assortment of stuff and still had failed to notice the general color scheme of the place.

you said go ahead with the hour advance and I must fold. Forgive this memo if it appears duller than usual. There's always a chance there might be an improvement.....

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Wednesday, October 12th, 1960.

Memorandum:

The lovely weather continues. Twenty five billion words wouldn't begin to express the multitudinous delights that were mine today when the message arrived from little Miss Lee, giving me such a grand panoramic view of all that has been swirling in the neighborhood of Lyme.

As expressed before, I hold the thought at all times that she may not worry in the slightest about the time lag in the exchange of written words. After all, I am under the impression that her telepathy is just as sensitive as mine and this being so, the written word is only second best and the greater is my joy in the realization that the pulse is maintaining its normal beat, regardless of what does and what does not find its way into the post.

It goes without saying that I am truly sorry to learn that an indisposition had a flattening effect of late but I rejoice that that corner has been passed and that a normalcy in health has returned to help one over the busy times just ahead. I hold the thought, however, that neither the thought of possible correspondence or any other item outside the immediate must stuff of the daily routine will contribute to additional exhaustion. Do cut all corners possible and whenever a moment for catching one's breath appears, do make the most of it by doing nothing save relaxing so that pressures may not get the better of good health and there may be a measure of happiness in merely making the most of quiet to glimpse the better the swirl of happy thought flooding in your direction through the ether waves.

The two portraits you sent along for Leston will be put to the best possible declarative use, I assure you and great is the joy in their availability. As for the Lincolnian



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sketch, I shall be delighted to put it to the maximum use along lines requested. Madam Regard was so delighted, as was her daughter, that your sweet note arrived on her natal day and I know they both will be equally pleased and surprised at the further floral remembrance. In view of the fact that floral offerings were plentiful on the natal day, it occurs to me that it might be especially nice and exactly to your liking if I send a floral greeting in your name on All Saints Day, a couple of weeks hence. It is a time the elder lady has always been to place flowers in remembrance of her loved ones in various places in South Louisiana and this first year that she is unable to do that, I think it would make her doubly pleased that someone of whom she is so fond should remember her. At the same time, you will recall, it was at the All Saint's season that she had her accident so that a floral offering at the season, too, will have a special significance for her and, I think, the gesture from you will touch her heart with greater depth, were that possible. Unless you do not specifically veto this suggestion, I shall assume it meets with your approval and make it a point to see something rather special is prepared and delivered by a reputable florist.

I am so indebted to you for giving me personal impressions of recent doings in your business neighborhood where such a galaxy of big wigs have been figuring so mightily in the lime light of political and all news media efforts and I congratulate you on having been able to catch glimpses of many of these folks. It's bound to make subsequent reading about them just that more interesting. I must say I find Mr. K.'s performances inexplicable for while it is easy enough to understand he might get great satisfaction out of being rude to everybody, it would seem that he, like Stalin before him, is wilfully throwing away a lot of good will that nobody, not even a Soviet tyrant can afford to waste. Again my thanks for such a lovely day and all that it will continue to echo down the days ahead.....

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Thursday, October 13th, 1960.

Memorandum:

The fine weather continues but it's a little warmer and I shouldn't be surprised if this means rain along about tomorrow or Saturday.

The day has been quite busy but I cannot think just why.

For one thing, there were quite a few 'phone calls that were out of order, all long distance. I received four before 8 o'clock from various cities both in Louisiana and Texas, and in each case, the speaker explained he was in charge of a group of students, number from 30 to 50, planning to attend the Hatchitoches Pilgrimage and asking if an exception couldn't be made for this particular group so that they might tour Melrose. In each instance, of course, the answer was very definitely in the negative. I think it quite a nerve for people to make such a request. After all, the visitation of about 50 people constitutes a tour in itself and multiply that by four and one is no longer not on the Pilgrimage.

A little later there was a call from Monroe, Louisiana,-- a couple of people named Sprout or some such, identifying themselves as the photographic arm of the Saturday Evening Post and explaining that Harold Martin had designated them to handle the illustrations for his forthcoming article and asking if they might make an appointment with me and Clementine Hunt,--they forgot the "er", and, if there were any other artist present at Melrose, that they be included, and all this for Friday afternoon.

I agreed on the hour of 1:30 and said I thought another artist would be here. If the Rocket keeps her appointment, they ought to be able to "strike" her as an author or some such. If she is here, she may be able to give them a few pointers on settings and subjects and she has so often covered. It strikes me it would be a splendid opportunity to give a little advance publicity to "The World of Clementine Hunter", if the Post people want to get a shot of the Rocket directing the artist in one of her scenes. As it may appear tomorrow ought to be fairly busy and we shall see what we shall see by way of one camera or another or both, and withal in color and black and white and movie and still.



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I turn the page and in doing so, I find my program for the morrow somewhat simplified. The Rocket called from Lafayette ~~ss~~ to say that the Linden Johnson tour of the southern states is a little ahead of schedule and that Mrs. Johnson has accepted her invitation to visit her at her apartment in the Pontalba tomorrow and therefore she will have to forego coming up here. She plans to go to the Johnson's Texas ranch on Sunday or Monday. She said she would send up her camera man on the morrow, however, ~~add that~~ I could direct him. I got a word in by remarking that the Saturday Evening Post would be here tomorrow and that changed things and so it was decided to call off the camera man she had already ordered to come and she will try to make it on Monday, the 24th. Well, that will be fine.

She said she was terribly depressed about one news item and knew that I would be, too. My old friend, Lionel Jeanmard, is in a coma in a Lafayette hospital, --cancer. I shall speak more of Linoel at some subsequent sitting.

I have listened to scraps of the third great debate but I shall not hear it in a solid sitting until later tonight. There's quite a bit of static but I am holding the thought a later hour will give a clearer reception. As near as I have been able to determine, this session was mostly an exchange between the two gentlemen of exchanging the old political statement: --"You're another", and I gather they didn't get very far. My guess is that the public mind is made up anyway and that voting preferences have just about jelled so that these later debates aren't amounting to so much by way of influencing many potential ballot-casters.

I was glad to learn this evening that Pittsburgh had won the World Series. Knowing nothing about baseball, I never seem to know what is going on in ball parks around the country all during the summer season but I am always interested to learn what finally happens, come October. I know nothing about the Yankees or the Pirates who, I believe, were this year's contenders, and at this moment, and I should dare confess this only to you, I haven't the slightest idea which team represents the National and which the American association, but I'm glad the sport ant mo ed to a club outside the community where it seems to be retained so often. This satisfaction on my part is based solely on the fact that it seems to me any sport must give greater interest to its devotees if there is a chance for smaller as well as larger communities to gain the trophy. And now I must get busy and do some work before returning to the radio to hear Mr. K. say Goodbye and catch up

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Friday, October 14th, 1960.

Memorandum:

The weather continues warm but a little on the damp side. It began drizzling around midnight and when I awoke at 4:10, we were having quite a shower. It remained sprinkley and cloudy until mid morning but by noon the sun came out and the skies cleared, even as they are tonight although the prediction is for showers tomorrow.

The Saturday Evening Post people came today precisely at the appointed hour. I am not sure of the spelling of their name but it is something like Stroudt, and they are husband and wife and I liked them very much.

I asked them to park at the side gate and as soon as they had descended, I asked them what their Melrose assignment called for. Pictures of me, they said, and somebody named Hunt which we all laughingly agreed might have another syllable added.

I should have called Miss Hunter immediately, I guess, but I thought it better to give them a once over of the entire establishment and let them get their bearings. This one, pictures in color began in earnest. They took about half a dozen of Lestan in front of Yucca with much butterfly lilies and Grandpa in evidence. That was followed by 25 or 30 on the Yucca gallery where the gourds delighted the Stroudts. Then I sent for the artist who came from her labors of scrapping pecaness and we took perhaps half a dozen, seated on the bench b St. Giggins Fountain and as many more at the Chapel end of the gallery, the artist paiting and Lestan observing her handiwork. Then we moved over the Ghana where we placed a chair in front of the house and the artist showed Lestan a Cane River Gobelin. About a dozen pictures were taken there, after which the artist returned to her pecaness and the rest of us chatted for half an hour before the Stroudts headed out for St. Martinsville. They were captivated by all they had to see and as old residents of Alabama, south of Mobile, declared they had never dreamed there was a place like this one and asked if I could catch the artist again to get a couple of shots of us in front of the African house and that was done and then they were gone. They said they would let me know, as Harold Martin undoubtedly would, too, when the story and illustrations would appear. They thought it would be within two or three months. What, if any, local pictures, may be used will depend on



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several factors but probably only one or two of the half dozen subjects that were snapped and only the best one of the numerous repeats of the same subject. All I can say is that I never saw color film used with such abandon before. Rather late last night I had a call from Mrs. Walker. As always, she was quite calm and spoke almost detached but was obviously moved. She had received a letter from a friend in Kansas City, a letter of condolence in pursuance of the death of Mrs. Walker's father in Florida and his funeral in Kansas City, the burial having taken place last Sunday. Mrs. Walker's father and mother were divorced years ago and her father had re-married. I believe Mrs. Walker was the only child. The step-mother had neither phoned or wired the news. It must have been quite a shock to have received the information through a condolence letter. Before the Enterprise office opened this morning, I sent flowers to the editor with a card, unsigned, reading simply "Happy Birthday" so that nobody in the office need know for what the flowers stood, - genuine sympathy.

Cousin Ruth Pierson just called to say Cousin Ida Chapman had arrived in town and wanted to say Howdy to me on the phone. Although we have never met, we hit it off just like one, two, three and she began by saying how vividly she remembered the kindness of an unknown friend in Manhattan who had procured her enjoyment of My Fair Lady for her. I shall probably see Ruth and Ida at Oakland tomorrow for a little chat and then, come Monday, they will drive down here between 9 and 10, after which Cousin Ida around 2 p.m. will entrain for Covington.

I didn't get around to say yesterday that the little Thank You card enclosed was from that colored lady to whom I sent the pitcher. I. S. Willard called me last night to say that Annie Claire Sunday or whatever her name is, had prized my acknowledgement of her note more than she did the pitcher which made us both laugh. It seems Annie Claire devoted her life to a white family and brought up a pair of twins for the household, always going to every place with them, -- a boy and a girl, -- believe, and even when the twins grew up and it was time for them to accept invitations to gorm up children's parties, they would always start a rumpus and balked about going. Annie Claire didn't plan to accompany them and it was the parents of the twins who provided, -- gave, I believe, Annie Claire the house and lot in Lafayette Street where she now lives, -- a

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Sunday, October 16th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Very heavy fogs until 8 or 9 o'clock each day of the Pilgrimage, with clearing skies before noon and ideal weather throughout the afternoons and evenings.

I am especially glad to report the Shreveport contingent never showed up.

Celeste went to town early on Saturday morning to walk the streets in her ante bellum costume and welcome people.

At 12:30 she and I headed up the road toward Oakland. She had been studying the page of description about the bed, chair and portraits in the bedroom where she was to be hostess. On our arrival, Lucille, -- Mrs. J. Alphonse Prudhomme, greeted us. On the way up, Celeste had asked me if Lucille had written any description of the place where I was to receive or indicated where that might be. Lucille had not. She clasped me by the hand, however, on my arrival and led me under the floor of the front gallery and behind the flight of brick steps to a door in the middle of the facade, quite dark, what with the width of the gallery above and the hugeness of the brick stairs, opened a door leading down a gentle slope under the center of the house, into a huge room without windows and black as Egypt. This is the museum, containing hundreds if not thousands of ante bellum medical and mechanical instruments which I discovered in vast rows when she turned a switch, lighting four electric bulbs without shades and each on a level with the eye. She explained that everything was marked on a card and departed. I had never been in the room before and I was impressed by the number of the objects ranging all around on shelves suspended from rafters, etc., the rafters being sufficiently low for a person above average height to bump his head on.

By chance, the first two people to invade the place was an elderly couple and, after exchanging Howdies, I waved them to the objects all over the place, explaining each was marked with a card. In a couple of seconds the man approached me to explain that he and his wife, through mischance, had left their glasses at home and as neither of them could read without them, he wondered if I would be so kind as to explain some of the objects and their use. Imagine.



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Quite a few people ventured into the lower depths, on hearing I was there, including a Shreveport niece and a Minden nephew of Mr. Hodges, some lady from Beaumont whom I had met on previous pilgrimages and so on. Everyone expressed surprise to find me thus concealed and we all got a big laugh out of the strange place we had so unexpectedly found to go into a huddle. I had to excuse myself to greet someone who had asked for me and the Beaumont lady explained, not realizing how close I was that she found it so odd to put a star in a potato bin and lost in the subterranean darkness. But I found the place pleasantly cool and pilgrims much fewer than I could hear treading over head, and, fortunately I was back home by 5:30. A very nice couple, a Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy of Cincinnati, ~~at~~ interested in Architecture, be-moaned their inability to visit Melrose. I made an appointment for them for this morning and they came and they were just grand.

When we said goodbye at the front gate, I caught sight of Joe Henry approaching. He had come in last night and is remaining until the morrow.

This afternoon Blythe and Joan, Joan's sister-in-law, Blythe's granddaughter, Ellen Lockett, and a girl friend of Ellen's, came to see me and we had quite a nice session. Oddly enough, I couldn't think of anybody I ever knew in Cincinnati except Rebecca Wise and it turned out that at one time she had lived in the same block with Mrs. Kennedy's sister. I think we shall hear more from the Kennedys.

As for Blythe and company, they headed out with many gourds which in no way balanced off the grand supper they had brought me. Blythe told me of her Thursday in Hatchez and Ferriday, where Jo Evans had invited her for luncheon with Mary Lambdin, Miss Myra and a flock of other people. She said Miss Myra looked just grand and seemed to be as hail and bubbling over with energy as ever. Mrs. Evans' daughter, la Applegate, was also at the luncheon and the hostess had an expert flower arranger to entertain the group. Talk moved from flowers to gourds and nobody but Blythe had ever fooled with them. Some of the ladies got interested and wondered where they could get seeds. Blythe mentioned the local assortment and it was agreed then and there that Mesdames Applegate, Evans, Lambdin and Smith would communicate with me to see about paying me a visit to see about gourds. Hummmmmmmmm.

And thus the week end of the pilgrimage draws to a close and I am delighted everything went along so nicely, especially for the Hysterical ladies.....

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Monday, October 17th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Lovely weather. I keep thinking of some place in Texas that sounded like Loveland or Lovelace or some such which a couple of days back had ten and a quarter inches of rain in fifty five minutes, the like of which I never heard before.

Well, Cousin Ruth Pierson brought Cousin Ida Chapman down yesterday morning and we had a real nice go-round and I liked Cousin Ida just as much as I thought I was going to. Ida brought a box of imported wine and Ruth brought a package of special narcissus bulbs and a box of cake and while I cannot speak for the narcissus bulbs as yet, I am quite ready to testify as to the excellence of the cake and wine.

That was most of the morning and about 1:15, when heading toward the store, having just passed through the side gate, I bumped into an unfamiliar car. I wasn't vastly surprised to discover the occupants to be Robina and Caroline Clananah who is Miss Dormon's niece. There had been a letter in Saturday's post or perhaps it was Friday's, --I forget which, but what with the secretaries fattening on cotton money and my absence from home on Saturday afternoon and the Kennedys and the Rands on Sunday, I hadn't explored the letters contents, telling me the ladies would be here today.

I thought Robina looked just grand and she was as gay as could be. We strolled over the hana where we sat and took things apart and put them together again. The ladies wanted to get back home before dark and so they pulled out a little after 3, giving me an opportunity to undertake some things I had been putting off from hour to hour. The first thing I undertook was to start for the store again but in about the same place I had encountered Robina, I ran into Joe who was trying to find pecanese to pick up. He invited me to go for a ride in his fine Volkswagon which I declined because I had things I wanted to do. He said he was going to slide over to the honkey-tonk to see about getting a bottle and within the hour he was back with some muscadelle which we sampled until supper time.

He told me J. H. had spent the day in Shreveport in connection with the division of Wenk property which seems



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among other things to involve a sum of 360 thousand dollars  
that has newly come to light. I cannot vouch for  
the truth of it, but I am told many doctors have a way of  
not entering segments of their earnings and for all I  
know, this may be a case in point which would not be the first  
time I had known about such practice in this particular family.

Joe remarked that J. H. was ~~be~~ worried about the doings of the  
party line and its constant ringing of everybody's phone  
but that J. H. had't been able to do anything with the company  
about correcting the matter. Joe, as supervisor of the R. E. A.  
phone section in Arkansas, had some pointers to give me about  
the mechanical operation of party lines and on the strength of what  
he had to say, I told him I thought I could  
get into the phone company's hair quite effectively through  
the printed word where J. H. had failed in verbal appeals.  
I accordingly came over here and sat down at my desk and  
an hour later handed him a Memo under the title of  
"In the Still of the Night which will put the Phone  
company in a tizzy. Joe was delighted and I shall put  
the piece in the mail on the morrow and it will appear a week  
from this coming Thursday. It's always a pleasure to  
go after the monopoly boys and I think this particular  
broadside will give them quite a turn.

I meant to say earlier that Robina brought me the  
enclosed clipping about Miss Ormon's work being mentioned  
in The New Yorker. I believe I have the clipping from  
the New Yorker itself in a batch of clippings I haven't  
explored as yet but which I shall pass along forthwith.

Thelma called to see if I was alright in the wake of  
the tour. She said she had seen some quotation from something  
or other about the Robiaux house in the National Trust  
publication, a booklet or magazine which I never seem  
to see although it is possible that La Hullock will  
be sending along one to me before long although I must  
say I want it only to send along to you.

From Joe I also learned Lloyd Wankie threatening to join the  
Marines. Power to him...and the Marines. And now  
I must get to work, after this little interlude.....

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Tuesday, October 18th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A pleasant day withal until 4:30, when it  
began clouding up, sprinkling and then raining. I  
suppose about an inch fell before dark and now at 9  
it is still gently raining. Thus far, there hasn't  
been any breeze of consequence and that means not  
too many pecanese have fallen. There will be scant  
cotton icked the rest of this week but there may be quite  
a few pecanese.

And speaking of pecanese, we were 11 gentlemen  
at dinner this noon, the majority of them being pecane  
experts and among other things they did declare and  
to which J. H. agreed was the fact that Melrose has  
quite a fine crop.

And speaking further of pecanese, I wasn't very surprised to  
receive a letter from Jean O'Brien which I knew would  
have the matter of pecanese as its primary reason  
for appearing. She seems to think if I were  
to send her pecanese, there would be no costs to her or me and  
she is mistaken. It was obvious that she had  
complained about not getting any from me last season to various  
people including James, Irma and Harley and so on. I  
can think of no valid reason why I should buy pecanese for  
Jean O'Brien and her friends and I shall write her pointing out  
that it is the State, not I, who has full particulars  
about availability, varieties, prices and so on. In the mean  
time, I wish Jean O'Brien would sit on a tack.

I was certainly surprised and not especially  
enchanted to hear from Rudolph today. I shall get off  
a letter to him tonight and I feel instinctively that he  
will acknowledge it by outlining a prolonged visit to  
Melrose one of these ensuing weekends which I shall discourage.  
I have scant time to keep abreast of things I want to  
do and entertaining Rudolph is not one of them.

Thelma called me this morning before leaving for Monroe.



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She will be back on Thursday and leave the same day for Shreveport for the weekend, returning home Monday, when she wants to come down to spend an afternoon with me. She said this year's Pilgrimage fell off by about one half. Some people, including Helma, attribute this to the fact that Melrose is the drawing card and its withdrawal cut down the number of Pilgrims. Carmen, on the other hand, says and confides it to me, that Melrose really isn't interesting and that Oakland is really the high point of any tour and therefore although the weather was fine this past week end, many potential pilgrims probably thought it might rain and therefore didn't participate. Beth doesn't care which school of thought is correct. She is furious because The Enterprise wrote about the Ine Chaplain house and didn't give Beaufort like space. Beth, in short, is a fool. She says Beaufort will not be on Pilgrimage next year and Heaven knows I hope Beth isn't.

Joe Henry who usually doesn't put in an appearance before 7:30 or 8 o'clock for breakfast, came to see me at 6 this morning and seemed surprised to find me not at home but fiddling around in the Ghana garden. He was curious to learn if I had really knocked off a column during the night, as I had, at supper, opined I would do, and as it would touch on party lines, a subject in which he is interested, he was hopeful but doubting as to whether I would actually knock off the piece. I told him he could help himself to the 8 page manuscript on top of my typewriter and suggested he take it back to the big house to glance through it before breakfast. He jumped at the suggestion and an hour later, over bacon and eggs, he expressed delight and gave me pointers on mechanical fine points about the telephone system which had no place in the Memo but about which I was glad to have some light shone on for my own understanding. Joe left for Conroe and Houston after dinner but will be making another round before we know it.

The rain continues its steady descent and so, probably the gourds from their softened stems. What the pecanes are up or down to, only the dawn will reveal.....

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Wednesday, October 19th, 1960.

Memorandum: Cloudy all day but pleasantly warm until about 8:30 tonight when it began cooling off rapidly.

The thermometer still sag to the 50's tonight, it is said, and into the 40's tomorrow night.

For the last three nights the heavens have been filled with the honkings of wild geese heading southward and about daylight this morning a whole flying squadron dipped below the clouds over Ghana so that I could see them quite clearly. They were rather large and I took them to be Canadian geese. This evening a small contingent of wild ducks came down to rest on Cane River just in front of the gardens but their number was limited and I imagine they will be gone again before morning.

Sunday night the Denver radio was talking about roads over various Colorado passes being covered with ice and snow. I had interpreted this to mean the higher elevations were beginning to get a taste of what was to follow all over the country but I somehow hadn't thought of the cold as being located anywhere but in the mountains. I gather from the bird migrations, however, that the cold must be general for the geese probably know as much or more about what is impending weatherwise as do the scientific boys charting atmospheric conditions just ahead.

At coffee Celeste remarked upon a notice in the paper on her lap about Roan and I asked her to clip it for me which she very kindly did and then very mistakingly folded and folded and folded and creased it. I found it a happy coincidence that an hour or two later, the day's post brought me the enclosed form letter from Roan. It appears that the Hatchez race provides a line from her to me at least once a year. I wish she would write more frequently. Her reference to an old friend of mine, the Reverend Jesse, brought back happy memories of days when I was wont to explore the Second Creek neighborhood on foot and I usually made it a point to stop in at Beverly plantation. --Roan's



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property and chat with one or another of her tenants, and always on the Reverend Jesse of whom I was very fond. I wonder what ever became of his son with such a distinguished name, --Roosevelt Ford.

There was less rain than I had supposed last night, only about an inch and a third. About 3 o'clock this morning a brisk breeze blew for a few minutes and that factor plus the dampness set the pecanese to dropping. I believe the plantation gathered about ten thousand pounds today.

Mrs. Walker just called, asking me to finish a sentence that had run off the page on the manuscript for next week's Cane River Memo under the title of "In the Still of the Night". I took the opportunity to ask her to read me what tomorrow's Enterprise will have to say about last week's pilgrimage. Unfortunately, there is a mix-up of copy, at least one line got mixed up, putting a dent in the early part of the article but otherwise it seems to be well set forth. I took the opportunity to ask her to read her editorial for this week although I am not sure if it appears as an editorial or an article. It appears next to the Cane River Memo if it is an article. It is about a person coming south to rest and I think quite good. If you find time to glance through it, I think you will enjoy it. I liked the idea of Louisiana trying to pull itself into the 20th century although the half way mark has already passed.

I told Celeste at coffee how worried I was by the Governor Barnett's admonition in Shreveport yesterday to a bunch of States Righters:

"If you want Washington to tell you what color, secretary you may employ, vote for Kennedy...." explaining how distressed I was going to be if instructed to employ a white one after all these years but she didn't find that amusing.

It is pleasant to report that tender green triangles and circles are emerging all over the banana garden as the autumn garden begins pushing up about the ground. I hold the thought the impending cool spell may not intensify into a frost and I think it will not....

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Thursday, October 20th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A beautiful day but on the cool side with the probability of going down to 40 tonight. I thought my radio was on a New Orleans station at 5 this morning and I was startled by the freezing temperatures predicted for tonight but it turned out I was on Des Moines, much to my relief.

The day's post brought me a letter from a lady in Natchitoches, or, more precisely, an envelope, inside which was another enveloped with letter inside. The inner letter was cancelled August 7th from Meria, Texas, where ever that may be, having been penned by somebody who had passed this way in July. The Meria letter bore my name, the next line being Melrose Plantation, the next line Natchitoches, Louisiana. Somebody, I suppose in Natchitoches, had crossed out the word, Natchitoches, and written in Melrose while stamped on the envelope were some such words, Person unknown. Return to sender. I assume the Meria lady returned or rather forwarded the letter to the Natchitoches lady who had come down here with her in July, and the latter had forwarded it to me inside another envelope. As the communication was merely a courtesy message, it mattered not at all but had it been something of urgency, the two months and two weeks required to reach me does seem a little long.

The laugh of the day came when I phoned the Sears, Roebuck office in town, asking them to have their Dallas office send me some paints. The girl who took the order was very pleasant and although she asked me if I spelled my name, immediately brightened when I did and in a very friendly way, inquired:

"Oh, sir, are you a retired seaman...it seems to me I have heard of you."

All of us have been taken for or mistaken for somebody else, but this is the first time I can recall having been thought an "old salt".



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The tear of the day came with the announcement in today's Picayune of Lionel's death. I have dropped a line to Joel Fletcher and hope he may have saved an obituary from the Lafayette paper. Lionel was as fine a man as I ever met anywhere and at the top of my list of Louisiana personalities. I shall write Madame Jeanmard a note and another to Martha whose last name, I regret to say, I know not but I can write to her nevertheless and send it to Plantation Court. Of the two ladies, I feel Martha will sustain the greater loss but take it the more stoically.

Carmen called me this afternoon to gossip. Among other things, she remarked that she would be going to Shreveport on Sunday to attend a meeting of the North Louisiana Historical Society. Every once in a while she lets her back hair slip a little without realizing it. She said:

"I don't want to be ugly but I think I shall leave the meeting rather after the business session is concluded for it is to be followed by a showing of the El Camino Real films with running commentary by Carolyn Ramsey."

Unless she, herself, had injected something ugly into her plans, I cannot imagine any reason for hinting there was anything ugly about leaving before the showing of the film and I am quite sure that for one, at least, Carolyn will have not the slightest regret that Carmen doesn't remain. What gets into Carmen's hair is the fact that Carolyn did a superb job on the publicity for the Pilgrimage a few years ago and Carmen has never quite forgiven her for having excelled in a field wherein Carmen would like to pass as the last word, all of which is foolish enough, even as jealousy will forever be.

We supped late tonight, what with the cook having returned from a pecan picking frolic in the afternoon plus the fact that the store is busy-busy handling heaps of pecanes gathered in the wake of yesterday's start. My estimate of yesterday's harvest was incorrect for it totalled something more than thirty-six thousand pounds and I suppose today's haul was equal if not in excess of that. Pecanes will be drying the rest of the week.

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Friday, October 21st, 1960.

Memorandum:

Fair but in the cool 50's but seemingly warm after last night's low of 39.

I suppose the week end will be wearing enough. Unannounced Sister, her daughter and her eldest or elder son, Lloyd arrived just as supper was over. I retreated to Yucca and a few minutes later, someone knocked. It was Lloyd who pushed a piece of cake in my direction, saying, or asking the most surprising question from that quarter:

"Why wasn't Melrose on the tour this year?"

I am thankful it was dark when the contingent arrived and that I could withdraw. I hold the thought we may not be honored too long by this visitation.

Mrs. Walker 'phoned at 1:30, asking if she might bring down some folders she had intended delivering earlier in the month. She arrived at 2 and we sat for a few minutes at hana when we saw a couple of other people approaching at the far end of the garden. It was Blythe and Elliott somebody from Hartford. Mrs. Walker was just leaving and so we all met and said goodbye and I returned to hana to chat with Blythe and Elliott and it was all very pleasant.

This morning I observed some doings in the peacock section that interested me. The big peacocks had never met the younger one who dwells in the Unicorn house and I thought it about time and that perhaps the younger one would like to join the others for a stroll about the gardens and perhaps join them atop a pecan tree tonight when beard-folding time arrived. I accordingly enticed the big peacocks across the garden in front of the African House and around little Miss Alberta's house to the unicorn garden, after which I opened the door of the unicorn house so the young one could join the others in the garden. Contact was established readily enough, the young one flying down from the attic of the little house and out into the garden. Everything seemed casual enough but



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none of the participants in the garden party seemed much interested in each other and within 20 minutes or so, the younger one hopped back up the step into the unicorn house and, after standing there a minute or two, flew back up into the attic of the little house and the oldsters moseyed off in the direction of Dr. Miller's house and that was that. I left the door of the unicorn house and its garden gate open for the balance of the day but along about first dark tonight, I closed both, the younger one having retired to his attic and the older ones having flown up to their favorite treetop. Nobody seemed mad at anybody but nobody seemed very glad either.

Like many another radio listener, I tuned in tonight on the fourth and, I take, final session of the "great debate", although the whole set-up still strikes me as being more of quizz session than a debate. I assume the majority of listeners were seers, too, and, for all I know, these historic debates depend more on sight than hearing and therefore the reaction of a radio listener cannot possibly hope to have the value of the TV public that could see as well as hear what was going on.

Which candidate is the prettier must cut some ice with the TV audience and which is the better actor must count considerably, too. Accordingly my reaction doesn't really matter much, being a mere radio listener.

From that angle, however, I must say the having been pre-disposed to be against Nixon, I inclined to be more critical of his performance and found him a little more cagey and a little more evasive and a little more ponderous without being any more weighty than the more sprightly Kennedy.

I guess my trouble is because of my negative approach to the whole performance. Doubtless this stems in large measure from the fact that while Kennedy doesn't excite my imagination too much, I am inclined to be a little luke-warm for his candidacy whereas, on the other hand, Nixon is anathema to me so that in casting a ballot, I should be marking my slip, not so much for Kennedy as but definitely against Nixon and tonight's debate did nothing to alter my convictions.

I. S. Willard called, just back from Baton Rouge. James and Kay, --on crutches, came to her hotel to dine with her, and they both seem fine.....

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Sunday, October 23rd, 1960.

Memorandum: Fair and cool yesterday. Fair and warmer today.

Well, the week end didn't turn out too badly although it was bound to be disruptive at best, as such week ends always are.

Sister came over to see me Saturday morning and then went to town. In the afternoon she came back and sat for an hour talking at a great rate and saying nothing. Lloyd had come over in the morning, intent on killing what remained of the birds, following their long summer's struggle against cotton and pecan spraying. In the afternoon both Lloyd and his sister, having nothing to do, came over to suggest to their mother they all return to Shreveport before supper. She wanted to remain until Sunday but finally gave in. I walked as far as the big house where I said goodbye to Sister, the children being a bit behind near the old fig tree, half way between the big house and the Yucca gate. I headed out toward the gourd garden where the younger contingent of peaches was whiling away the afternoon peacefully enough. Then, in rapid succession, two volleys from Lloyd's gun went off, the explosions startling the younger peacock contingent which leaped into the air and took off in the direction of the woods a mile or so distant in the direction of Little River. The Winks went on their way but the peacocks didn't return last night and never put in an appearance today and so I reckon I might as well write that section off as finished.

During the morning, while they were in town, the "ocket, of all people, appeared on the front gallery where I was attending to gourds. She said she never liked to miss traveling along the Cane River road when in this area, the scenery is so beautiful. She plans to address the Historical Society to night, or perhaps it was this afternoon, returning here on the morrow to take some shots of cotton fields, the artist and so on. She was phoning for her camera man to meet her here in the morning. She said she didn't know if Ola Mae is in Shreveport or not, as she had recently been in Florida and the Bahamas, --the Lost Word, not the "ocket. But how those girls do get around, jointly, separately and both.

My reading machine is out of whack and so I did nothing



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in that line on Saturday night. Instead I knocked off a column and was glad to fold up early. Last week a football game, being broadcast at the Invitation to Learning hour, robbed me of whatever that discussion may have been about. This week the football took over an hour later and so I heard the discussion of Bergson's "Evolution Creatrice" which was instructive enough but somehow lacking punch in its presentation. I forget what they announced for the two succeeding weeks but I do remember that neither item sounded very exciting and so I shall sooth my resentment at broadcast time if once more the football section of higher learning gets a corner on broadcast time.

I. S. Willard came down this afternoon to select some gourds which she has in mind hanging from the balcony of her house. I suggested she make a selection now so that I may give them priority of treatment so they will be sufficiently cured by holiday time so she may have them exposed from the balcony without having to worry as to what inclement weather may do to them. I put a hunk of anglefood cake, a bottle of wine and a couple of glasses in a basket and ushered the lady over to Ghana, after she had selected her gourds, and there we sat on a bench for an hour before she had to return to town. I have a heap of admiration for her, especially when I think of the other gals of her generation who, like herself, were born in a small town and never had the fortitude to get a glimpse of wider horizons before getting into a fixed mold and solidifying into a life of trivia. Like most people of such strength of character, she undoubtedly know loads of people with whom she is probably onely most of the time until she can get away from them and close her door on the world and then, by concentrating on the things that seem important to her, really find a few hours worth living during the week. Like a few other people we know, hers is probably an unreal world from daylight to dusk with actuality really beginning when night comes on and she can turn to the the things that seem worth while to her.

What with yesterday's hubbub and I. S. Willard's arrival just as today's secretary got going, I don't seem to have gone far with yesterday's post but I shall get caught up on that on the morrow. There seems to be a letter from Aton'ouge and letters from there seem to have been a little sparse of late, and one or two others, such as from Cousin Ida Chapman and the like which will rest very peacefully until another dawn.

And now for a dab of radio, such as the round table type and I shall call the week end begun as I drift off into dreamland.....

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10800

Monday, October 24th, 1960.

Memorandum: A perfectly lovely day and sort of 80-ish.

The fog that descended during the night, however, was so thick all over the Gulf area that people were still using headlights two hours after sunrise.

The rocket got here about 9:45. Her camera man from Lafayette arrived 15 minutes later. We summoned the artist and immediately began shooting some scenes for The World of Clementine Hunter.

We began with a shot the camera was placed about where Irma O'Brien stood to get the picture she did last January. A washtub, a washboard and a bench and a clothes line, running from the gutter of the house to an adjacent pecane tree turned the trick. When things were ready, I lighted a fire beneath the wash pot, the iron one, from which the artist with a stick dipped out clothes and dumped them into the washtub. She then drew buckets of water from the cistern, a bucket on a rope, rinsed the clothes and hung them on the line, --red table clothes, checked with white, a blue shirt, white towel and so on. This will be a good interlude between a couple of her washday pictures in the film, I think. Then we did a scene of her sewing on a one liver gobelin with me handing her some shears. Then a round with butterfly lilies and then a gourd scene on the Yucca gallery, after which the rocket, the artist and the camera man made a round of the cotton fields and got many pictures, after which they all went their respective ways.

The skeleton of the World of Clementine Hunter is shot but the will of course be many more fill-in scenes, --pecane picking, pain etc., etc.

At 4:30 the Rocket took off for Old Bonita. She is broke, she says, and has to borrow to pay her income tax. She is letting her cottage at Bay St. Louis go. I hadn't known she had one. She is renting the house at Old Bonita to a friend. She is going to share 511 St. Ann with somebody. It's always boom or bust and at the moment, it appears to be the latter. I shall be glad to do what I can to assist in participating in the film, helping with the script, etc., but it seems a pity the rocket has to go.



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A package, about the size of a shoe box goes forward by this post. It contains three seasoned gourds of no particular value, as they are merely three different types from this year's vintage. The smallest is just another gourd which, with the others, might possibly used to decorate a week end basket of fruit or some such. The short handled maranka gourd, a sort of childish rendition of a cave man's club, you have seen before. The third is the Andalusian type as mentioned in a Cane River Memo of a week or so ago. You may be able to detect the aroma of the Andalusian orange groves. It is the one I have kept on my desk for the past few weeks. For all I know, you might prefer to keep one or another of these on your desk, giving the others away instead of using them for domestic decorations. I think you will discover a paper sack in the package so that you may readily dispose of the cardboard carton, finding them easier to carry in an ordinary sack such as one might be given, were these secured at some vegetable or flower shop. As pointed out above, these are of sentimental value only but they are being sent regardless in order that you might have some notion of some of the smaller type of stuff about which I have chattered so much during the past season.

Carmen called today as usual to gossip and tell me about her week end in Shreveport, all of which was dull enough, including her impression of Carolyn's appearance, never dreaming that as she was talking, Carolyn was sitting in a chair at the end of my desk. She repeated an impression someone else had expressed to me and a rather odd thing it was too, having to do with a Mr. Britton of Hatchitoches, a professor of music at the college and organist in the Episcopal Church Carmen attends. Mr. Britton died of cancer in a Shreveport hospital last week and was brought to Hatchitoches for burial services. Several people have commented on the peculiar sensation produced upon them when they reviewed the remains at the funeral home for it seems that by some unaccountable circumstances, Mr. Britton, a man of fair complexion in life, had somehow taken on a negro complexion in death, so that old, old friends and acquaintances were at first startled, then puzzled and then almost panicky on recognizing the familiar face in an unexpectedly different racial guise. Carmen, as might be expected, was provoked that the lid of the coffin had not been left unopened. As she rattled on about the matter, I couldn't help recalling that Lyle always referred to her as "old black Carmen" and used to speculate on how much African blood there might be in her branch of the family. I do believe Carmen, herself, would fall out if the thought ever crossed her mind that Fate would certainly be paying her

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Tuesday, October 25th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Pleasant enough in the 80's and partly cloudy with the promise of rain tonight and on the morrow and I hold the thought the Weather Bureau may be in error since nobody seems to be crying for rain.

Juanita B. 'phoned me this morning. I told her I had thought of her so often during Pilgrimage, regretting her usual post wasn't open and that she wasn't dispensing hospitality but that on the matter of the tour, I told her about Lloyd appearing at my door after dark on Friday night, pushing a package at me and without bothering to say Good evening, shouted:

"Here's some cake...why wasn't Melrose on the tour this year."

Juanita B. liked that and asked me how the cake was. I told her that I had to confess it was wonderful. She laughed and confessed it was she who had baked it, sent it to me by Pat who must have sent Lloyd over with it and Lloyd hadn't bothered to explain, giving the impression that it was a Shreveport gesture.

Then Juanita B. confessed that a while back she had sent me another cake and some meat pies and asked if I had ever received them. I had not. Only the Lord knows what happened to that gift but one always feels provoked at seeming, as I must have in this latter case, to have been so gauche as to have accepted the gift of the meat pies and cake and never bothered to acknowledge same.

Like everybody else in the country, I suppose, I, too, am wearing of the Presidential campaign. Surely there must be a better way to elect a Chief Executive than by such a prolonged effort on the part of the big pigs to confuse the electorate with the flurry and the unending barrage of half truths and untruths that flood the air on the slightest excuse or no excuse at all. Having always felt Nixon to be a political



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charlatan, I regret I have to witness so many examples on his part in the present contest proving the point so that my respect for him will be even less by the time election comes and, God forbid, that he should be awarded the crown. I must say the British practice of keeping the length of the party campaigns down to a fraction of the length of the American scuffle strikes me as having everything to be desired and nothing to be regretted. I have no doubt the great American electorate will survive the ensuing two weeks but many a voter, it seems to me, is likely to be so addled by the time he reaches the voting booth he is likely to be uncertain as to "where he is at" and quite unaccountable as to which levers he will be operating. I don't know and I don't care how the Louisiana voting machines are rigged up to take care of all the stuff that the citizens will be called upon to cast ballots on or about. Among other things, it seems to me there are 55 Amendments that are supposed to be accepted or rejected individually by the electorate and most of them if not all of them have no more place for decision by ballot than the thousands that have gone before in other elections.

I have heard it said that games of chance invariably increase in times of depression and in view of all the gambling going on in the neighborhood, I am led to conclude that the whisperings about falling stock markets and such like on the radio must have trickled through to the folks who, in this area, wouldn't have any idea of what a stock market might be but would probably guess it had something to do with selling cattle on the hoof. The flurry in the pre-drop pecane effort last week presents what I have in mind. All the youngsters are avid card players and although all of them always lose to the bigger boys, they never can resist the lure of getting something for nothing. Last week, one youth, around 17, had been paid 45 dollars at noon on Saturday and by 3 o'clock on the same afternoon, he had lost it all at cards. This is not an exceptional case although the amount involved turns up in individual pockets infrequently, such as a spurt of pecane gathering or some such. Yesterday, Bookie Moran, --he's well named, complained he got "cheated" by the smaller boys last week since he got only 100 dollars out of them on Saturday and he usually rounds up twice that amount. Verily the depression must be upon us and Bookie is always driving

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Wednesday, October 26th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Damp, damp. With no breeze stirring, a gentle rain that was more like a sprinkle descended during the night, providing us with an inch and a half of moisture we really didn't need. Clouds draped the skies all day, converting the cotton pickers into pecane gatherers although the calm that never fluttered a leaf didn't knock down many pecanes which are still clinging to the trees.

I am glad the cold front, so called, that passed over us during the morning actually brought no cold so that the thermometer remained around 80 which struck me as being quite different from what the radio reports from the environs of Lyme.

Andy passed by in the afternoon and gave me a hand at gathering okra which made that undertaking much easier. The okra which ought to be about 3 feet tall stands about 10 feet and as the fruit appears at the top of the stalk, a stepladder would be required to reach it, were one unable to bend the stalk down within easy grasp from the ground. With two people proceeding along a row of the stuff, one individual about six feet from his companion, it works very smoothly, the man next to the row bending the stalk to within reach of the other, thereby obviating the running back and forth that would be required, were one trying to gather it alone.

I was glad we found enough to supply the big house, the house across the fence and enough for three or four meals at Andy's house, too and some for the artist. The tomatoes linger on and the turnips are putting forth, providing ample supplies for at least four or five households. Andy had a big old sack of stuff when he headed toward home, seemingly provided with enough to set up in business a Bleeker Street push cart operator and the same might be said for me as I distributed portions in three ways closer to home. Andy, by the way, now lives in the house below the spillway where little Miss Lee once marched to call on the aforesaid painter, so one may readily understand Andy had quite a walk under such an assortment of green groceries.

While I think of it, may I report that I have decided to advance the date for the flowers for Madam. Regard by a couple of days in order that she may have



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the best from what is available by ordering same for Saturday delivery. The Louisiana custom to do a tremendous amount of decorating of graves on All Saints Day makes quite a run on the flourist's supplies and so I have decided to select something on behalf of little Miss Lee for Saturday so that Madam Regard may have the pleasure of showing it to her friends who may call over the week end and at the same time guarantee the best their is in the market to severve as little Miss Lee's talisman of affection.

On the political front, the anti-Kennedy groups aren't working very well together and I'm hoping may be so busy fighting each other they forget to direct their brickbats against the democratic nominee. All the racial and religious bigots in the Pelican State have been beating the drum for everyone to vote for States Rights electors and people like cousin Emmet, Senator Rainach and such like have been beating furiously in favor of this. Then the Senator from Arizona blew in, --I refer to the Reverend Goldwater, and he explained everybody must vote for Nixon as a States Rights vote wouldn't cut any ice and therefore would be robbing Richard. And then the financier of Fasites, H. L. Hunt, one time backer of Joe McCarthy, sent his agent, one Dan Smoot, into Louisiana from Texas, to explain to "the right thinkers" that by all means they must vote for the States Righters and, as you may readily conclude, it is all very confusing for those who have been taking instructions from Cousin Emmet, Cousin Barry and Cousin Dan. I don't know anything about J. H. Hunt's current financial standing but I assume it is very high although I'm not at all sure he is still rated, as he was a few years back, as the richest man in the United States. Be that as it may, he continues to have sufficient money to corner radio programs in vast numbers and his agents never cease proclaiming to the world not only the theories of extreme conservatism and reaction but Nazi tinged ideas to boot. If only H. L. Hunt would take a page from A. J. Hodges and concentrate on gardening instead of trying to upset the American political applecart.

The first class mail sack must have gone to Buckeye today but that means a double dip on the morrow and I shall like that. No hope the snow banks stay away from Lyme.....

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Thursday, October 27th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Fair of sky and fair of thermometer, --sort of 70-ish. Saturday's post from Lyme arrived to brighten my days. It is so good to catch a glimpse of life as it turns in little Miss Lee's surroundings and it's so nice to catch up on so many points as covered by the clippings. Regarding the latter, you were so right in assuming the illustration of the gourd arbor resembles the local one, five or six sections wide and about a block long, I guess. I thought the article on the ex-Welfare children in Louisiana excellent and I'm delighted to have had an opportunity to read it. Oddly enough, regarding mention that the New York Times, up to Saturday last past, had not come out for any candidate, this morning the radio carried the news that the Times had at long last made up its mind and, surprisingly enough, for our side, although it must be confessed that a day or two ago, while campaigning in the Illinois area, Mr. Kennedy is said to have made vast use of the Times so that today's gesture on the part of that paper may well be said to have been a sign of appreciation even though the advertising the paper got in the land of the Chicago Tribune by the candidate had nothing to do actually with the decision on the part of the Times.

While I think of it, let me respond to your inquiry as to whether the scrapbooks have come back home as yet. The answer is But No. As I recall, it was a cold day when they left here, perhaps in March, and I was assured by the merchant planter they would be microfilmed and back again within three days, and here it is October. I am sure they are on their way.

And speaking of the scrapbooks and the microfilming reminds me of Gene Watson who engineered the microfilming ruse. Tonight the annual Chamber of Commerce will name him as Man of the Year and Thelma Kyser as Woman of the Year. I have already written him a letter of congratulation although the dinner is still in progress and the honorees haven't as yet been announced which is just another way of saying the local grapevine is working very nicely.

I had to laugh in my beard this afternoon when Carmen called me. She was what might be described as glum. She never mentioned tonight's dinner but I could somehow instinctively feel that she had been working her grapevine, too, and had resented what she heard for



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jealousy is one of her major curses and she is quite jealous of Thelma and the crown of laurels, presented tonight to Thelma, will be a veritable crown of thorns, so far as Carmen is concerned.

It goes without saying that I rejoice that eleven days after the election the matter of the reunion which has been a matter of so much concern for such a prolong time will begin its completion. I can readily imagine how little Miss Lee in particular and many other people in general will sigh with relief when the motors begin spinning and the final American part of the story will have been completed.

I appreciate your kindness in letting me know the news from the old country. I find it remarkable as one frequently has an opportunity to reflect on the phenomenon wherein one member of a family whose health has always seemed delicate keeps right on going while the other, so often a picture of health, is the first to buckle. It goes without saying I shall always be enchanted to hear further news as it comes to hand. I find myself wondering about the offspring, too and wondering how the same fares and if it is likely he will emulate his parents and do as much traveling as they did when his age.

You will enjoy the letter from Mrs. Spinks which you will agree is excellent. I must have told her about the clerk in town who asked if I might be the retired seaman. Naturally I shall answer the letter forthwith and recommend book writing be undertaken forthwith. If she can write a book with the same verve as she penned the letter, it ought to be equally excellent.

I got quite a bit of hoeing done this afternoon and loved the pungent, clean odour of the good clean earth. I shall be stirring myself on the morrow before sun-up and set out a few hundred onions which ought to make quite a pretty line about the parterres, just inside the rows of turnips. My friends, the rabbits, adore onions, of course, and I shall be appreciative of their good work in nibbling on the regimented rows to keep them from getting too perfect.

I haven't read it yet, but I'm told there's a story about an attempted hold-up near Grand Ecure at a gambling house, said to be frequently now and then by the merchant-planter. And now must stop and get to work. My day has been so happy, thanks to Saturday's post from Lyme.....

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Friday, October 28th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy this morning, rain this noon, sunshine this afternoon and lovely moonlight tonight.

Mrs. Walker called me this morning to say the Chamber of Commerce dinner had gone off nicely and that Norman Fletcher had been named the man of the year instead of Eugene Watson and that Thelma Wyser had been named the woman of the year, as my grapevine had reported. She said Thelma's response was like a gust of bracing fresh air in a gathering that otherwise was mighty stuffy. She said Governor Davis was dull and looked terrible.

Carmen called and said the dinner had been fine, that Governor Davis had made a fine speech and that Thelma and Norma had received the awards.

Thelma called and said she had been looking forward to seeing me for too long and asked if she might come this afternoon. She might. She came at 2 and remained until 4:45. She said John wanted to come down but was tied up with something and couldn't get away. She asked if I would see him and Sylvan Friedman on Sunday afternoon. I would.

It seems Sylvan Friedman, a State Senator, is chairman of Louisiana's Civil War Centennial Commission, and had gone to John who is on the State Board and asked John to tell him what to do. John had told him they both would do better to see if they couldn't see me. I think I shall be able to give them a hand, outline Louisiana's course of participation and at the same time provide the State with some permanent benefits and perhaps provide one or another movie taken at least a couple of good concrete facts for pictures. Sylvan will get the honor, John will get the credit and I shall get pleasure in my anonymity.

I wish you could have the basket Thelma brought along with her fruit, canned things such as shrimp, etc., preserves, fancy cheese, special sausages, home made cheese crackers, wine, French bread, a half gallon of ice cream and heaven knows what all. When I



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was told by the cook tonight that she was "studying about" going over to Houston for the week end, leaving tonight, I felt quite secure, thanks to Thelma's largesse

Thelma told me she thought Rosalyn had sold the Aswell cemetery. A couple of weeks back, Rosalyn was so doped up she was definitely out of her head. Thelma had had a doctor go around to see her and between them, they had succeeded in persuading Rosalyn to go to the hospital last Sunday. A call from her at that place today indicates she is much improved and even is considering going over to Georgia to visit her mother. Poor Rosalyn, --everything by way of talent and nothing by way of happiness. The doctor, I believe, suspects she gets her dope from drug salemen but isn't sure. What a pity such a gifted person should be made worthless by narcotics.

This morning's Picayune reports the death yesterday in New Orleans of Lois Lester. I shall have an obituary to send along within a few days. The paper gives her age as 70 or 71, I forget which, and it doesn't matter. Carmen thought her to be a little older. One thing is certain, she wasn't of last year's hatching since she was the 1912 Queen of Mardis Gras. Here was something about the way she put on her hats that somehow brought to mind the Gainsborough rendition of the Duchess of Devonshire and she certainly had some of the famous Duchess's beauty, only I like to think of the Duchess as being just a little prettier and a little dumber but quite a lot more filled with human affection. Perhaps I should have said that I hoped the Duchess was a little kinder all around. To illustrate my point, I must confess I doubt if the Duchess ever did much in the basse-cour but Lois made turkey-raising a hobby. What distressed me about this was the approved housing of the turkey who spends their days on no firmer foundation than chicken wire which must have been terribly uncomfortable since the bottom of their pens were perhaps 3 feet from the ground and jammed together much like subway riders out of Times Square in the five o'clock rush. To spend a lifetime in such a situation would strike me as both boring and painful but, for all I know, the turkeys didn't mind. One thing is certain, Lois wouldn't have minded if they had.....

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Sunday, October 30th, 1960.

Memorandum:

The rains came Friday night and kept going for 24 hours, spreading 3 inches of rain across the cotton fields, the pecan orchards and the gourd trellises. Tomorrow the cotton will see nobody but there will be plenty of people in the orchards. As for the trellises, they gave up 22 heavy gourds that had fallen on the ground. Today it has been fair enough but a wind rushed down from the ice cakes around three o'clock this afternoon, snapping off quite a few banana stalks and tonight the thermometer stands in the lower 40's. The forecast for Monday is fair and cold.

On Saturday morn I thought the time perfect for the greeting of flowers for Madam Regard. It seems as though chrysanthemums pop up in every quarter at this season of the year in this locality and so I recalled the lady was exceedingly fond of carnations and I ordered a nice fat bunch of pink ones, beautifully set off with appropriate trimmings and had them delivered at the hospital so that she might have them on Saturday evening when she was expecting people to visit her, and thus be able to enjoy them with them and at the same time have a reminder of little Miss Lee that would carry through Sunday and Monday and Tuesday. I gathered the lady was delighted and her daughter wept this noon when she told me about the gift and the lady who sent them and the word, Affectionately, that accompanied them. I understand the daughter penned a line of acknowledgement to Lyme on Sunday morning and proposed to mail same in town this afternoon so I reckon you may have seen it before. This memo reaches your true hand. Madam Regard's son-in-law who seldom remarks upon finer points remarked at dinner today that "that sure was nice of that lady to do that, wasn't it?" and both his wife and I agreed.

Saturday's post was fairly heavy, made up in large measure of requests for tours, use of the library, etc., all of which I have disposed of and shall no longer burden the mail with same. I was quite taken aback by a note from the widow Jeanmard which I shall send along later for I



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want to hold it for her first name and her home address. In her note she refers to my kind letter to her and because her husband was so fond of me, she hopes the friendship may be transferred to her. You see I wrote Joel Fletcher who always agreed with me that Lionel was a grand guy. I don't recall just what I said to Joel but it was something to this effect:

"Dear Friend, In Lionel's passing, you and I have lost a true friend and the world a grand soul. When you and I are together, we shall commune on this matter. J. H. is up to his hips in pecaness while I am bogged down in vegetable gardening but if you get up this way before snow flies, you will drop in and we can take up the thread there. Affectionately, etc."

It is obvious from the letter of the widow Jeanmard that the President of Southwestern must have sent my note to him to the widow-lady and somehow she got the impression that it was addressed to her and sent in care of Dr. Joel. I wince every time I think of her reading about J. H. whom she doesn't know being up to his hips and so on, incorporated in a letter which she must think is one of condolence to her. Misere!

In the matter of the selection of the Man of the Year for Hatchitoches, it seems that there was a deal of politicking which I haven't been able to figure out as yet but shall do and pass along my findings eventually. It was decided and by whom I know not that Dr. Eugene Watson should receive the award and that decision appeared final up almost to the time of the announcement at the Chamber of Commerce dinner but then something happened and Norman Fletcher was named instead. Cousin Arthur who is Eugene's brother was entertaining the Governor prior to the dinner. The restoration of Fort Jean Baptiste has been Eugene's pet project and various interested parties are fishing around for fifty thousand dollars out of State funds to get the restoration started. It was agreed that with the Governor present and being shown the I. S. Willard model of the fort, Eugene would be named man of the year because of his interest in the restoration and the Governor would be persuaded that he should give a favorable nod to this undertaking which the community, by its endorsement of Eugene as The Man, would feel properly moved. Well, Cousin Arthur entertained the Governor prior to the dinner, the Willard model was examined and then the announcement came at the dinner that not Eugene but Norman was crowned. It is all quite surprising and it will be interesting to learn what really happened between "the cup and the lip"

01801

10812

Monday, October 31st, 1960.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold with the promise of a frost in some places tonight. When I heard the thermometer had dropped below zero, I was glad that the place was Colorado and that I wasn't there.

But Colorado is next to Wyoming and I was delighted when my friends from the town of Gaspar or Caspar, I forget which, dropped in for a brief howdy.

They were quite enthusiastic about jet travel, explaining that they can now leave their Wyoming home where they summer and find themselves at their Hawaii place within 5 or 7 hours. One of their sons who is establishing New England College, of all names, in Australia, is only 15 hours from them when they are in Hawaii so that nobody in the family group ever seems very remotely situated, the one from the other.

They mentioned some guests at their Wyoming place strolling out the other day from the ranch house and returning again within 25 minutes after having brought down two bucks. How long it takes to stroll out and bag a couple of turtles from their Hawaiian home, I didn't ask. But the killing part of the whole business is the fact that finding themselves in possession of so many advantages, including the Hawaiian establishment, they are heading southward by car to spend Christmas in Florida. I have no doubt that if they should fall in love with Florida and close their Hawaiian place in favor of Palm Beach or some such place, they would undoubtedly decide to spend their winters on the Riviera or at Rio de Janeiro or almost any place, just so long as it was far away and could be readily reached by jet.

In short, they are lovely people but I must confess, like so many others we know, they are bound to be a little light in the head so far as this mania for gadding about is concerned.



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News about Rosalyn's doings isn't good. Celeste saw her in the corridor at the hospital on Friday. Rosalyn told her she had fallen from a ladder and was at the hospital recuperating. She was heading toward the lobby and went out, got into her station wagon and drove off. The hospital, feeling responsible for her, was in a tizzy to catch up with her. It is said, however, she is now staying at her own home. Helma phoned her on Saturday, suggesting she have lunch with her and John at the college, immediately after church on Sunday. They saw her in a rear pew when they entered but she was gone when the service was over. All three attend the Episcopal Church. Helma got her on the phone in mid afternoon, inviting her to run in for supper. -- Rosalyn spends much time in the hotel lobby. She accepted the invitation but never did show up. A year or two ago, when Rosalyn was on a tear and her uncle was here from Georgia, he asked Helma to call him if ever she felt Rosalyn needed him or Rosalyn's mother. I should think Helma would do well to put through a call. Carmen, whom I do not believe on most subjects, says the Aswell home is just about bare or bare what with Rosalyn having sold or pawned stuff but how Carmen would know anything about the home or where the stuff has gone or how, I wouldn't know. Rosalyn has always claimed she is afraid of the dark, keeps all lights burning throughout the night and girl friends, such as Helma, are afraid to go out to the house, day or night, fearful that Rosalyn being drugged up, might take a pot shot at them. It's a pitiful case and especially so in view of all of Rosalyn's gifts, -- painter, pianist, writer and withal a charming person when not "coked up".

Celeste took off early this morning for Mansura and will remain there for two or three days. She explained last night that she really didn't want to go but her mother wanted her to and "I sells that likes done bought it", to borrow an ancient phrase.

Today I found 20 more big gourds on the ground and what with quite a breeze stirring tonight for the Old Witch to ride I'll probably find more on the morrow.....

10814

10814

Tuesday, November 1st, 1960.

Memorandum:

A perfectly lovely day but a little cool. Somehow it's one of those times when a visitor from another planet, just landed, could easily be persuaded it is spring and the rents appearing among the leaves are merely places that will be filled in shortly as the leaves attain their full growth.

The surprise of the day came a little after 1 o'clock this noon when I responded to an unfamiliar voice of the gallery. And while the calendar certainly indicated the month to be November, the person declared herself to be none other than June. She had a girl friend with her whom she thought would like to see the place but she was mistaken because the girl friend had seen pecaness on the trees and hoped to find some on the ground. The concentration remained in that line of endeavor which suited me to a T. June spoke of her marital difficulties but seems resigned to them. She mentioned la Montespan and asked if I had seen her lately. I had not. She said she was sorry that she had been with her "that night" when they were driving around and la Montespan had insisted on coming here and that she appreciated I had never let her husband know about it. She was well behaved and seemed kindly disposed toward me but after they had filled the paper sack I had given them to hold pecaness, I did not try to discourage them when they said it was time for them to be going. Perhaps a minute, perhaps two minutes after they had headed down the road, Dan came from the opposite direction and therefore did not see them. The clerk had seen them but I doubt if he imparted the information to the husband, and that was that.

Half an hour later, Blythe and Joan appeared and sat for an hour or so. She had gone to school with Lois. -- Blythe had, and said she thought her so attractive but found that



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like most other people she has known who were born in New Orleans, Lois always thought that fact gave her the right to give orders to everyone born beyond the city limits, leading me to conclude that Lois and Blythe never hit it off together too well.

I was glad to talk with her about Lionel whom Blythe knew. Madame Jeanmard was Catherine Simmons, daughter of Dr. Simmons of Alexandria who was Dr. Rand's partner for a number of years and so those two girls were well acquainted also. I did not mention the widow Jeanmard's letter to me.

The mail brought me something I never had before when the postman handed me two letters from Hatchitoches, --both of them being invitations to the Alvin Deblieux's daughter's wedding. The day's post was fairly heavy and, after seating a secretary in the chair at my desk, I sat in the red leather armchair just behind and from that vantage point threw some letters in one heap, some in another and placed the trash, including the two wedding invitations on the flat top of the gas heater hard by. I picked up the other letters but left the trashy stuff and forgot they were there until the post sun-down chill impelled me to touch a match to the heater which, after a few minutes gave off a scent of smouldering paper. It didn't burn them completely but they certainly look like an evil omen for the impending nuptials.

I am penning these lines a little later than usual because I listened for too long on a Hatchitoches broadcast of the 55 Amendments on which voters will be asked to approve or disapprove on next Tuesday. Mrs. Walker, Cousin Arthur and Senator Friedman handled the business and it was pretty dull subject matter, I must say, although both Mrs. Walker and Cousin Arthur were able to inject a bit of comic relief although Senator Friedman was as dull as the professional politician he is. Why the thing was conducted in the Court House instead of the radio station, I know not. Perhaps there was a crowd to be considered. Off hand, I can think of nothing more ridiculous than asking the electorate to pass on 55 Amendments, the vast majority of which pertain to things about which voters outside a limited area know absolutely nothing and care less. Only 14 percent of voters ever bother to vote for an Amendment anyway which shows how silly it is to submit such things to the public instead of settling the matters concerned through Legislative action in the first place. now I must fold.....

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10816

Wednesday, November 2nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Lovely Indian Summer weather.

Celeste returned from Mansura and while nothing was said about any dancing in the streets, she apparently was satisfied with festivities in the graveyard where things were busy in observing All Saints Day and over the coffee cups in private homes where she visited.

And mention of the graveyard reminds me that Sudie Laughton's husband died today. Two or three people in mentioning the event continued in almost identical words:

"He was such a nice man and Sudie is such a bag....."

But even the bags seem to have soul companions and I suppose Sudie has her share although at the moment the only one I know is little Dorman of the Briarpatch. Olive Long Cooper used to be a Sudie buddy but they finally fell out in the wake of their concerted drive against the city in the matter of decorating the magnolia at Christmas time along the river front.

J. H. spent the day in Shreveport, called in to give moral support to his sister in the current divorce squabble. There seems to have been a transfer of a couple of hundred thousand dollars to on the part of the husband to someone or other with a view to eliminating it in the division of property. J. H. looks so tired these days, it seems to me a great pity he has to be drawn into all the wrangle going on in Shreveport.

Reverting to the Lawton thing before I forget it, Mr. Lawton got a large loan from the People's Bank the other day. If it was insured, Sudie can keep the money, according to Lester Hughes, without ever having to pay it back. I don't understand that at all but so it seems to be, but if the loan wasn't insured, Sudie, instead of being "all set" will have to give up whatever property there is to satisfy the loan.



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On the Aswell front, Rosalyn was in the ospital in the morning but in the afternoon she flew out to attend to some business, as she explained by telephone after she had left. Nobody had been able to locate her during the afternoon or ~~up~~ up to 10 o'clock tonight. Her uncle is supposed to arrive from Georgia on the morrow to take her back there with him. Rosalyn was told of this plan and seemd to think it a good one but the fact that she has vanished makes people like helma who has done so much for her have misgivings. Therefore, if Rosalyn doesn't turn up by morning, the police will be notified and a search will be made in hopes she may be located before her uncle arrives. I'm glad her son, Melvin Douglas, jr., is still teaching mathematics in Copenhagen and I hold the thought that news of his mother's performances may not seep through to Denmark. It seems to me I heard something about Melvin Douglas, senior, being in New Orleans recently but that was before he was soing the commercials for Westinghouse during the broadcasting of the political campaigns in July. Whether Melvin and Rosalyn communicated following their divorce, I know not but I assume each would naturally be interested in the career of the other in view of all that had gone before. Poor Rosalyn, possessed of so many splendid potentials should have to be going through all the trials that must be hers as of now and in the days ahead until, let us hope, she gets rehabilitated in Georgia with her people once more.

During the past couple of days, the plantation has again switched its attention from pecanies to cotton and perhaps this may explain why I got quite an unexpected assortment of ex-secretaries this evening. Pecane gathering is paid for at the end of each day, providing much grist for the local honkey-tonks within minutes payments are made. In the case of gathering cotton, however, such accounts aren't settled until the end of the week and from this I conclude the ex-secretaries may be feeling the cotton pinch after the little season of pecane largesse.

There weren't too many interruptions today and so I was able to plant all the parterres with thousands of onions which, within a couple of weeks, along side the triangles of mustard, turnips and the like, ought to present quite a pretty study in varying shades of orange and red to the November landscape. And so things go and so must go to bed and may I say be settling down after a day of so much political doings on the Presidential front.....

31801

10818

Thursday, November 3th, 1950.

Memorandum:

The grand weather continues.

I was glad to notice a picture of Thelma and Norman on the front page of this week's Enterprise, sandwiching in one Jimmy Davis. I don't recall if you have seen a likeness of Thelma before.

Her inordinate exertions during the past few days to get Rosalyn on the right track seem to have induced a headache that kept her flattened out today. Rosalyn, in the mean time, has not been located. It is thought she may have gone to some motel anywhere between here and Alexandria or Shreveport. Her people, I suppose her uncle, was scheduled to arrive here during the afternoon but whether he arrived or not and whether they ever caught up with Rosalyn, I know not. Gossip has it that it is supposed Rosalyn's occasional registration for a night at one motel or another instead of going home was based on the probability that a motel might be among the more convenient places to transact business in "snow".

I talked with Ann Williams Britton this evening. She says her new daughter whom she named Eleanore after the lady doctor is doing just fine. She had quite a lot to say about politics and as she and Mrs. Jimmy Davis are on quite friendly terms and as they spent the evening together last Thursday night and as Mrs. Davis is said to have much influence over her husband, one may conclude that the Governor's heart is not much in the special legislative session he called for tomorrow. Apparently States Rights politicians put on pretty strong pressure.

I was glad to learn that the arch firebrand of States Rights and anti-racial legislation, Senator Rainach, has had "something like a nervous breakdown" whatever that may mean, and that his physicians think he will probably never be



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very active again politically and, to my way of thinking, that is excellent news, even though there will be plenty of other hill-billies to step into his shoes.

The Shreveport radio this noon reported that while H. L. Hunt has admitted to having sponsored sending out anti-Catholic literature in July, he has now "seen the light" and is favoring Senator Kennedy's election. H. L. Hunt is such a bag that I conclude he has simply picked up the Kennedy banner to distract people investigating his other political doings. I assume that in reality, H. L. Hunt is not anti-Catholic since his money bags are said to have been at the disposal of the late Senator from Wisconsin and or but since they were and since Hunt seems to be awfully isolationist, among other things, it certainly sounds odd to hear him say he is now supporting the Senator from Massachusetts.

The Hatchitoches Times in an editorial today came out in favor of the States Righters and urged their readers to support that crackpot collection of cheap politicians for, as Charles set forth in his editorial, "we cannot support either Kennedy or Nixon".

The Rocket who recently remarked her monthly telephone bills were running around \$130.00, --did I say monthly, must be tightening her belt on that line of expenditures and at the same time conserving postal spending, too, at least so far as this bend of the river goes. She had decided to take pecane gathering shots for the "orld of Clementine Hunter this past week or rather this current week but here it is Thursday night and no sign of camera men or directress. Perhaps she has whisked Clementine Hunter away into some new world since the artist doesn't seem to be responding to telephone rings that sound on my instrument when she gets calls. As for myself, I am as pleased with the barren stage for I have plenty to claim my attention without getting tangled up in films.....

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10820

Friday, November 4th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Indian Summer continues. It is a little warmer and we are promised rain along about Monday.

L'affaire Aswell continues and the dominant note remains the same:--Cherchez la femme". A representative of Rosalyn's family arrived from Georgia last night. In company with a lawyer, the representative drove out to Rosalyn's home but they found no one. They tried again this morning but had no better luck. I suppose Rosalyn may be in a motel in some neighboring community but that is merely a guess in an attempt to account for something about which I -- and apparently everybody else knows nothing.

In town, under a dazzling sun, they buried Sudie Lawton's husband. In the country, under the same dazzling sun, the whole population concentrated on gathering pecanes, ranging their activities over miles on the plantation from the river bottoms of the Red, Little and Cane Rivers to the hills of Montrose. Whether it was the ozone or the desire to round up as much cash as possible, everyone stuck to the task until dark, after which each workers sacks had to be weighed and all the workers paid off. Pecane gathering is paid for at the end of each day, for some reason, but cotton picking isn't paid for until the end of the week. And the impulse to round up cash probably stems from an impulse to hustle off to a dance at the honkey-tonk. My mail was fairly plentiful today but obviously no secretaries would have time for anything but snatching at their pecane money and rushing off in the dark to get rigged up for the frolic. Tomorrow cash will be less plentiful and until high descends more leisure to do secretarial work.

I talked with I. S. Willard tonight, just back from a couple of weeks around the State.



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She saw Kay and James on Tuesday night, found Kay bubbling over with ideas about a new residence for it seems there are lots of new houses on the market in Baton Rouge and Kay is anxious to have one. James seemed a little worried. I. S. Willard seemed a little worried, too, because, in spite of the time that has elapsed since Kay's operation, she continues suffering from severe pains at the spot or around the spot where the operation was performed.

Kay spoke with enthusiasm about the mother of her god-child who got tired of being worried about domestic affairs and flew off to Europe for a vacation. I. S. Willard and I agreed that even if Kay should experience such an impulse, Europe at the moment wouldn't have much to offer Kay who doesn't seem worried about anything. We further agreed, however, that the last person who would travel really ought to be James. I. S. Willard thought a trip to Manhattan would do him a world of good. With his inquiring mind, it certainly would offer him stacks of interesting things to speculate about but like a European trip for Kay, so a Manhattan trip for James would be successful only, it seems to me, if each were accompanied by someone like I. S. Willard or possibly me since each of them would miss a lot of windows through which they should gaze all along the way and without someone to wave them to such windows, they might round out a solitary journey more convinced than ever that they would have done better to remain at home. Somehow it all reminds me of a young lady I once knew. She wasn't interested in animals and couldn't tell a horse from a mule. She had an impulse to go to Paris, however, and came back to report on her activities which apparently were all devoted to race track all the way from Longchamps to St. Cloud and never really did go anywhere except to the races during her summer abroad. Some people do best to travel alone. Others do better to have a window-opener along side.....

10822

10822

Sunday, November 6th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Our Indian Summer continues, the air a little cooler, the sky a little bluer and the ozone just a little more bracing.

Carmen phoned me this morning to say that she had gone into the hotel coffee shop for an eye-opener after church this morning and had bumped into Rosalyn, her mother and her uncle. Where and when they had found Rosalyn, she didn't know although she chatted with them for a few minutes before going on her way. She said Rosalyn's face look a little swollen and she appeared vaguely untidy. Rosalyn explained that when she and James had built their house 22 years ago, they had unwisely put in concrete floors and it had occurred to her the other day that if she were to fall on same and break her hip, she might be unable to summon help for quite a time and accordingly she was thinking of accompanying her mother and uncle back to Georgia for a visit. That excuse seems to be as good as any and I hold the thought that this may see the end of the Aswell matter in this Parish until Rosalyn has been restored to perfect health at least.

Along about an hour after dark last night, the Wenks blew in, Sister, daughter and Lloyd. She had had J. H. order a new car for her and, as it had arrived in the afternoon, she had been notified and so had come down to pick it up. I am delighted to say that I did not see any of them last night but this morning a little after 7, the daughter tapped at my door to say her mama was at the big house and had some cake for me. I accordingly went over and as coffee was being poured, I drank a cup with the lady. "Lloyd wants to have a baby", she began, and after this



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somewhat unexpected announcement, rushed on to say that although he hasn't finished his education and hasn't any job, he has decided he wants to have a baby and has found a prospective mother just to his liking. According to Sister, the prospective bride is much older than Lloyd, in fact the girl is 21 years old. Inasmuch as Lloyd was a baby when I came here the second time in 1939, it would seem to me that Lloyd can't be too far from equalling the prospective

bride in the number of years each can claim but I'm a poor mathematician and perhaps the span of years between 1939 and 1960 makes Lloyd only 5 or 6 years of age which seems to be about right as measured by his mental attainments. Sister further explained that since Lloyd does want to work, they were sending him to a psychiatrist to see what's wrong with him. I gather neither parent has ever suspected that Lloyd is simply lazy but I am under the impression the psychiatrist can come up with something much more complicated to bring the value of his services into line with the size of his bill for professional services rendered.

Saturday's post was heavy enough, especially with catalogues from wine houses, dealers in fancy groceries and such like. I thought the letter from Mrs. Spinks entertaining as usual. She sent me a pound cake and some pickles a while back, which I thought very kind of her. They were excellent. I thought her husband's story about the slaughter of the poultry hilarious. A while back I had suggested that she jot down the stories about her grandfather and said that from the references to him in a recent letter, I should imagine a title for such a volume might be something like "Mr. Harrison and God Almighty". Mr. Harrison or whatever her grandfather's name was, struck me, from the thumbnail sketches she had written of him, was one of those people who are forever laying down the Divine Law and then calling on God to subscribe to them, hence the suggestion that the Harrison name come first.

I liked the letter from James. I do wish, however, that he would give more information about Kay's progress. As she probably has more letters, she must think it odd I refer so infrequently to her health.....

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10824

Monday, November 7th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Fair but a little chilly.

I am forever running into names of towns I never heard before whenever I tune in on almost any old radio station. Twice this evening I encountered the same new name on radio broadcasts from two adjoining States, Texas and Arkansas. Each turned up in reporting an accident on Staten Island, --a train and school bus argument with the train apparently winning. And the name of the town that was new to me was reported by both announcers as New Drop. Of New Drop I have heard, of course, but New Drop was something else and I'm delighted to share it with you although I must confess it isn't much.

Ann Williams Britton called me this afternoon to say she and Jack have to skip down to Alexandria tomorrow and asked if they might stop off to see me on their way back and borrow, --imagine borrowing, some gourds since Ann is supposed to submit an arrangement of some kind for some sort of a flower show, the purpose of which seems to be to demonstrate how attractive random odds and ends may be brought forth if properly arranged. She said she didn't have much time for casting about and had thought of using some gourds in her desperation.

I think she was quite taken a-back when I offered to help her out by way of a dab of legerdemain, explaining that Blythe had made me a dried flower business, couched in a gourd and that if she wanted to borrow it and not tell her associates, I would lend it to her for the show, thereby saving her a lot of time and energy, neither one of which she should expend on the thing. As the idea took hold, she became enthusiastic and now, of course, all I am hoping is that Ann's entry may walk off with the first prize.

It seems to me quite a while since I last heard from Ora but Ann said her mother and the rest of the family are doing just fine and that Ann's brother seems to be getting along alright at Tulane or where ever it is in New Orleans he is going to college.



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On Saturday afternoon, Pat brought me some people but as he left before they did, I didn't get a chance to talk much with him. Over the coffee cups this morning, Celeste said something about Pat and Juanita B. going to New York but an interruption prevented her from elaborating. I must call Juanita B. on the morrow and see what's cooking. As I recall, their wedding anniversary is November 13th and perhaps they are going on another honeymoon.. I shall touch on this at a subsequent sitting.

I suppose one of the distinctions of this Presidential election is the number of voters who are still reporting they haven't made up their minds as yet. All I can say is that if they really haven't, they probably never will. This reminds of the retired overseer who always has been and still is pretty much on the tipsy side most of the time although he either doesn't show his condition too much or else one is so accustomed to his state that one takes it as normal. He spends most of the day light hours parked on the gallery of the store and therefore next door to the pecan house where the voting goes on. Such proximity to a voting machine which is never very busy anyway would seem to enable the man to cast his vote fairly early but such is not the case. On the last go-round, pretty well along in the afternoon, he was winding his way down the road toward his house, a little below the garden and was asked if he had voted.

"Nope, not yet," was his prompt reply.... "haven't made up my mind yet who to vote for....."

Whether he ever made up his mind before the polls closed an hour or so later, I never did ask.

As though there weren't enough confusion in the world, I have come up with another item to add to the scuffling. What I have in mind has to do with night light saving, as opposed to day light saving. It came about this way: tonight's news reports that because of time differences, Alaska's polls will not be closing tomorrow night until 2 a.m. our time. As I understand it, it's dark most of the 24 hours at this season of the year in Alaska. If this be so, I can't see as it would make much difference to the voters in that State if they cast their ballots somewhat earlier so that it would bring them into line with Washington, Oregon and California so that tabulations would be completed at about the same time. The news bulletin didn't report the time difference between the West coast and Hawaii but even though it be light in the islands, I should for just one day they might move ahead a little, too, I should

10826

10826

Tuesday, November 8th, 1950.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and mild with a promise of rain on the morrow.

I am writing at 10 tonight, giving the radio a rest and the vote tabulators an opportunity to catch up with their work. From all the talk I have heard thus far, it would appear to me both candidates are running side by side and I suppose we shall have to wait until the big States indicate their preference before we can really tell which candidate has an edge, if any, on the other.

I find it paradoxical that Ed. Murrow should have been flattened out with a touch of pneumonia at just the time in a four year period when he probably counted most on being at the microphone.

I have been listening to CBS and am puzzled by the voice of Bill Downs which doesn't sound like the Bill Downes I have always heard on CBS. He seems to be taking care of the mid West section of the voting and has spoken several times in a voice that I should never have recognized. I haven't heard anything about any tonsil or larynx operation but it appears to me there must have been some physical alteration to have produced the unfamiliar tone that seems to be his tonight.

I was glad to see Ann W. Britton this afternoon. She had young Sam Hill's wife with her. They had been to Alexandria and Ann was bringing back four hundred dollars worth of dresses on approval from which Ora will make a selection for herself in anticipation of attending some kind of a social gathering this week end. I am always impressed the way the Alexandria department stores will let people living fifty miles away take out fine dresses on approval and, in the present instance, at least, the dresses aren't even put in boxes but remain on coat hangers and hung up inside Ann's station wagon with merely a wrapping paper put around their top and middle and the lower part of the dresses allowed to flutter in the breeze. I'm sure the store knows what they are doing but I must say it strikes me as being somewhat non-chalant.



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Ann was delighted with Plythe's dried flower arrangement and took it with her to enter the show. Plythe will certainly be surprised if she receives an award from a show of whose existence she doesn't even dream.

Everybody says J. H. looks haggard and Celeste complained at coffee that he doesn't sleep at night and has some difficulty with his breathing although he has no cold. He had to chase off to Shreveport again today on some Went business, although the demands on his time here were tremendous, what with transactions resulting from the current dual harvest of cotton and pecaness.

He was back for supper and as the other left the table before he and I, I took occasion to speak to him about his health but, as always, he brushed that subject off as being of no matter at all, just the way his mama used to do until one day came when there would or could be no more brushing aside of anything.

He said he had tried to get Sister to come back with him this afternoon. Imagine. But, praise the Lord, she declined. He said she was in a flurry but thought she wasn't drinking. I doubt if he can always tell when she is or isn't. I asked him if the children were about and he said they were but added that they, of course, instead of being any help were simply sources of greater confusion. He said he had never seen a family like it and never would be able to figure them out. I could only add my Amen to that observation.

I was glad to hear from Robina and discover that she is apparently rocking along just fine. It will be interesting to learn what she has to report on her Thursday Briarwood visit.

And now I must return to the radio and see if our favorite candidate is making any progress.....

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10828

Wednesday, November 9th, 1960.

Memorandum:

It rained nearly an inch last night, slacked off around 8:30, the clouds remaining, then dumped about three and a half inches out of the skies between 10 and 12, drizzling during the afternoon and still cloudy tonight. The temperature was moderate enough but tonight it is supposed to slide down to about 38.

I talked with I. S. Willard yesterday. She asked if she could bring down three people, --a twosome from Shreveport and a lady from Quebec, to arrive this morning at 9:30. I said that would be fine if it didn't rain when the place would be too bogged down. And so it rained and so I went on about my business and lo! at 9:30, I. S. Willard arrived with her guests and I. S. Willard, for one, was not wearing rubbers. It wasn't raining at the moment, and I did a sort of slap-dash tour but just as we got to Yucca as the place we would inspect last, the heavens opened. The three guests were having to push through a somewhat tight schedule since they were going to Oakland from here and somehow arrive at Hodges Gardens to dine with Mr. Hodges at noon. Still, the rains came down so might there was no thought of leaving until it slackened a little. I poured port and everybody seemed happy and relaxed except I. S. Willard who was trying to reach Lucile by phone to explain they would be a little late reaching Oakland. She never did establish contact. In the mean time, the rains, instead of letting up, only increased in intensity. It reminded me of the deluge of November, 1948. Finally, it was decided they all would have to leave regardless. They had brought one parasol and three raincoats which they had left in their car. I provided a raincoat to a young man to round up the duffle and lots of newspapers and things to cover the perruques of those who had no hoods or parasols. By this time the water on the ground was ankle deep. But go they must and go they did and that was the end of that visitation, except for one surprise I got when I ushered my guests into the library at the big house where I, entering first, fell slap over an oversized set of bed springs and mattress, slap in front of the fireplace. Everyone was amazed to find such a thing in such a place and I was a dab rumbled but unhurt by my fall. Later I



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learned that last Sunday morning Sister had sent Lloyd with a servant to Cloutierville to pick up the aforesaid springs and mattress she intends taking to Shreveport eventually and the thing, on arriving here, had simply been tossed into the library, slap in front of the fireplace where anyone entering the room would be bound to fall over it if one failed to jump over same. "What a dumb set of bunnies!"

It goes without saying that my unexpected guests and their tendency to linger awaiting less torrential weather, prevented me from getting to the post-office before the mail had gone, which explains why yesterday's memo and today's will be mailed at the same time.

I reckon I scarcely need remark upon my delight over the results of yesterday's election. After chatting a dab with little Miss-Lee last night on this keyboard, I resumed by post by the radio. I followed the unexpected warring and waning of political fortunes until about 3:30 when I dozed off. Awakening at 5, I began paying attention again, for I had not turned off the radio at all, and thus was able to learn a candidate had finally been elected along about 6:15. Like the radio and TV people who labored so arduously throughout the night, I, too, am glad Presidential candidates don't run more frequently than every four years. I recall the radio quotes Barry Goldwater as explaining the Nixon defeat to the fact that he was a "me-too" candidate. That might be one of the reasons, perhaps to account for the smaller segment of people within the die-hard section of the Republican Party who thought, --and God alone know how, that Eisenhower was too radical. Somebody reported Tuesday night that Mr. Nixon exclaimed:

"What went wrong...how could this happen?"  
Unfortunately, I think Mr. Nixon really never did realize that he couldn't do the snide things he did to win a point and not have people with some glimmer of ethics objecting to his trickery. I must say, however, that I find it refreshing we should have a President-elect who seems to have breeding and a brain, not to mention a heart, and I, for one, would rather descend into Hell with such a companion

18801

10830

Thursday, November 9th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy all day but clearing tonight to make possible our first freeze of the year. Shreveport is expecting 28 degrees and if that applies to this neighborhood, it will be goodbye to the 1960 butterfly lily and banana plants. I regret to say the sky has cleared at least by half and I conclude I was right today when I put away the electric fan for the season.

The town papers were late in getting off the press last night, in consequence whereof we got no delivery of same today. I am mailing a section of the Mogan City special issue of some time this autumn when that town celebrated its 100th birthday and the newspaper got out a special feature issue. I am not sending the whole thing which is rather bulky but I am taking out the section in which Aunt Willie's article about her girlhood in that area is recounted. The article, I think you will agree, is well turned out and I think you will enjoy reading it.

Come to think of it, I reckon November 11th may well be a holiday for the postal boys and if so, this will be the last memo to go forward this week. Accordingly, if there's a skip in deliveries for a day or two, you will understand. I never know when holidays are or are not holidays in this State and I hold the thought that there may be a trickle of out-going mail on Saturday regardless, but I doubt it. I learned today that Pt and Juan took off by plane for Manhattan last night and are returning on Sunday or Sunday night by plane. They will accordingly have returned before this memo reaches your true hand.

The thought occurs to me that I must have mis-dated this letter for today must be the 10th and so this note will therefore not go forward until Saturday. It's lucky my head is sewed on or I might be forgetting it.



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I reckon I had been asleep a couple of hours last night when "suddenly there came a rapping, as of someone gently tapping, tapping at my chamber door". It was the brother of the late Dark Duke. He said he had been released from prison that morning and had passed this way before going to Alexandria to live with his sister. Naturally there were lots of points about which I should have liked to inquire but as he had been out of touch with the river for so long, it seemed only considerate to help bring him up to date on events. He did say that life at Angola hadn't been so bad and that the work wasn't very hard. I thought he looked fine and naturally was delighted to do everything I could to make his return to society as pleasant as possible. I must say, however, that I really did sleep soundly, once I undertook another go at that line of indoor sport for the election returns of the night before had allowed me less than my usual allotment of complete rest so that I didn't awaken until 5:30 this morning which is somewhat later than I begin to stir.

Today's Cane River Memo has something to say about Algeria and, as has happened in the past, coincidence has in news broadcasts underlined the subject which was knocked off a week or so earlier and so it seems to have been tonight, with particulars about an Algerian set of gangsters in Paris murdering some of their fellow countrymen and the President planning to make another effort to do something about the whole miserable problem of the status of Algeria itself.

As James indicates in his letter, the current members of the Louisiana legislature leave much to be desired as representatives of the saner segment of the State. Naturally hill-billy voters beget hill-billy legislators and hill-billy legislation tends to exert a dominant force in legislative proceedings. There is one misconception about religion in Louisiana that has come to the fore on a couple of occasions of late, and especially in the wake of Tuesday's election. For some reason, I believe many people living outside the Pelican State believe it to be predominantly Catholic whereas it is my understanding that in reality Protestants outnumber Catholics by a substantial majority. Perhaps this is why Louisiana never gets a Catholic Governor but perhaps the impact of the Kennedy election may herald a change in the political effect produced by religion or so-called religion, I hope.....

08801

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Friday, November 11th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Clear and chilly. At 5 this morning, the Hatchitoches radio reported the thermometer standing at 32. A freeze means au revoir to so many subtropical plants that I regretted the appearance of brown that would have replaced the butterfly lily stalks, banana leaves and such like but to my surprise, they retained their mid summer coloring, leading me to assume that there must have been quite a difference between temperatures in the 15 miles spread between here and town.

Mrs. Walker called me this morning and although she maintained a gaiety of spirit, what she had to report sounded ominous for the future of The Enterprise. As I understand it, the Times, which has always published ads at ridiculously low figures, has begun, now that he has married wealth, to be tending to give away advertising space and, reminding one of Hearst in the old days, can afford, through other income, to publish his paper at a loss which the publishers of The Enterprise most certainly cannot do. What will come of all this, and when, is anybody's guess. Cut-throat competition of course is as old as the hills and it would appear we are about to witness another example of it in the local papers. It does seem a pity, however, that the good paper should have to go down while the other should survive, not on its own merits but simply because of a monetary squeeze.

The grapevine rattled last night, bringing the news that Joe Henry had arrived shortly after dark. I saw him at breakfast and he reported that Juanita A. would be driving over from Texas tonight. I believe he said schools were open in the Lone Star State today, accounting for the lateness of her arrival here. Joe expressed surprise on learning that Pat and Juanita B. had flown off to Manhattan. But politics were uppermost in his mind and he cornered me in the



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office at the store during the afternoon to read me a flock of political articles from the morning paper which I had long since heard over the radio.

My reading machine has been in need of some tinkering of late, merely mechanical jobs requiring no re-placements and since Joe loves fiddling with such things, I set him to work and was enchanted with the results. I ran through a page or two of a book I have been intending to read for some time, --

a book I have been intending to read for some time, -- "In Kindly Gander by Edward Weeks and found that it read so easily that I am looking forward to enjoying several pages tonight before folding up. As you know, Weeks handled books for The Atlantic and what he has to recall about various authors with whom he has had dealing makes excellent reading. The autobiographical pages are well turned, too, and as the recording is in the best of style by one A. Scourby, Esquire, the whole business is altogether appealing.

I. S. Willard called me at dinner time this noon and I realized immediately that she must have the sniffles but she declared she didn't catch a cold from the Wednesday soaking she got at this bend of the river. She said she had busying herself during the morning with the gallery she proposes for the lower floor of her house. Before she had completed the preparatory work, she said, she had experimented a little to see how a few Hunters would look in the corner of her unfolding gallery and was enchanted to be impressed by the glow of color they bestowed upon the whole room. She said she had been to the Carvers last night where several people had spoken to her about the Algerian thing in this week's Cane River Memo and how glad they were to have it present in comparison to a Texas setting, enabling them to comprehend some of the considerations in the Algerian fandango they hadn't thought about previously. I had a couple of men waiting for me for a "drap" before going on to dinner and so had to break away but she threatens to give me another buzz tonight. So goeth this November 11th holiday and peaceful it was, too.....

10834

Sunday, November 13th, 1960.

[illegible]

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And I hope to recommend him kindly to my son Edward Weeks.  
 dated this 28th day of March 1874 at the City of New York.



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mentioned the book to I. S. Willard when speaking with her on the phone. She told me one or two things about the Weeks family, not mentioned in the book. The author merely mentions New Jersey as the home of his family. I. S. Willard says the town is Elizabeth. She mentioned having gone to school with one of the Weeks girls and having dined at their home on occasion....in-

interruption..... I believe I was talking about the Weeks ménage. It seems that Edward Weeks, known as Ted to his friends, tutored a half sister of Brenda Trazier, -- a debutante of 20 years ago, at least, and it was she whom he married. On one occasion, I. S. Willard said she was invited to a dinner party at the Weeks home, not for the charm of her society, but simply because there were only 13 and another person was needed to break the unlucky number. That sounds just like I. S. Willard.

While I was reading last night, a little after 9, my phone rang and it was none other than Kay, calling from Baton Rouge. Vaguely it seemed to me one day last week that her birthday was the 13th and I accordingly sent greetings on Saturday and the call was an acknowledgement. She sounded quite gay but confessed her hip still caused her some pain but said she was getting about and that she and James had been house hunting and had found some quite pleasant places. She said she still would prefer building but feels the details would be too exhausting and so she is willing to settle for a house already constructed. She said she and James are keeping me in mind and when they have finally decided on just the right place, they are coming up and carry me away with them.

I told her that I thought Aunt Willie's article in the Morgan City an excellent one and she said that Aunt Willie had done it all by herself with no help from anyone. There was one phrase in it that had reminded me of Farley but perhaps that was merely imagination on my part.

10801

10836

Monday, November 14th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy to partly cloudy and warm. I write with windows and doors wide open. We are promised warmer weather on the morrow.

Much to my delight, the postman brought me a surprise package today which I haven't opened as yet, awaiting the services of a secretary before doing so. I feel instinctively, however, that little Miss Lee, with characteristic thoughtfulness and generosity, has decorated me with a new ribbon and I am enchanted. May I express my sincere appreciation and say how good it is to know this medium, so indispensable for communication, is readily to hand when opportunity for use and someone to "thread" it coincide.

From tonight's radio report, I take it the racket in New Orleans today wasn't so great as it probably will be on the morrow, but, nevertheless, I'm grateful to God that it wasn't too noisy today. The Legislature is said to be in a perfect tizzy of frustration, hill billies all who can't see beyond their noses to comprehend the effects be produced all around the world at just the time we are trying to cultivate Asia and Africa. But most of the Legislators probably never heard of such places and are too hide-bound to carry anything about considerations other than those revolving around their own immediate stupidity.

I did a little reading last night and liked what I read, -- a chapter or two from Catherine Drinker Bowen's "Adventures of a Biographer" or some such title. I found what I read much to my liking but wondered if my interest was heightened because I had read her biography of Tchaikovsky and Justice Holmes about which she was primarily concerned in the chapters I read. I guess she was talking more about her impressions of St. Petersburg and Moscow while gathering material for her work on Anton and Nicholas Rubinstein than about Peter Illyovitch although she did give a few paragraphs to the visit she made to Tchaikovsky's



10837

10837

home, a couple of hours outside Moscow on the road to St. Petersburg. She had not been to Russia when she had written the Tchaikovsky biography and accordingly in that biography, she merely mentioned that there was a house but gave no account of it.

I assume the Rubenstein biography or biographies have already appeared in print but I haven't heard anything on that score and so have no notion as to the title. I believe the current volume refers to her Russian Hajira as having taken place in 1937, leading me to assume the Rubenstein opus must have seen the light of day in print long ago. I think I shall inquire about this in Baton Rouge.

Returning to Blythe's visit with Miriam along side on Sunday, I assume Blythe had more to say about school than she would have, had Joan, a lady of Jewish extraction, been with her. Blythe recalled that when she was a girl, there were many undersirable Jewish families in that city and accordingly, her father, Judge had built a private school in their garden and employed a couple of teachers. It was here that the Whites and some of their better bread neighbor's children received their instruction before going to private schools. Since the White children and their friends were too superior to go to school with the Jewish children, it appears perfectly natural in Blythe's mind that her grandchildren should be withheld from going to school with children of color today and I suppose it is equally natural that these grandchildren, being handed down these concepts from grandparents, will continue the "holier than thou" viewpoint as they, in turn, beget their children and grandchildren in the generations ahead. Thus, bigotry projects bigotry and if it isn't directed against Jews, it may be expected to be turned toward people of color and, I suppose, if you run out of color, you can channel it toward people of some other denomination, people with different colored perukes or whatever, and thus the vicious circle goes 'round and 'round while the examples of Jesus, Schweitzer and such like appear more and more remarkable.

"For God so loved the world" says the Good Book but I must say I sometimes wonder why He did when I observe the doings of people like Blythe when she heads out on

10838

10838

Tuesday, November 15th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and warm with short sleeve sport shirts the order of the day. The promise is for more warmth and more clouds on the morrow.

The postman presented me with an altogether charming and unexpected plaisir from little Miss Lee this morning. It is so good to catch this vignette of life in Lyme and I only regret that it swirls so swiftly but hold the thought current pressures will be contended with and that correspondence is left to mental telepathy until things slow down a little after the holiday have come and gone.

I had forgotten about the gourds momentarily and so was delighted to learn that they pleased. At the same time that the package went forward to Lyme, I sent one, less svelty of line, together with the Cane River Memo on the subject, to the Gourd Society but have not as yet heard from that quarter.

Today's post also brought several other messages from thither and yon. Inadvertently I started to dispose of Hobina's but stopped just in time to preserve it for enclosure, thinking you would enjoy having her impression of the Briarwood visit and, at the same time, thinking you would get a laugh out of the Methodists leading us off to war. You would have enjoyed that portion of the letter, had you been so lucky as to have my secretary reading it to you since the Quaker became a Racker in the secretarial rendition.

Apparently James was feeling on the gay side and obviously Bob is nicely adjusted to his pursuits at the University of Texas. I hadn't heard from Bob Wilson since last Christmas and so was doubly delighted to have news from that quarter and I shall make it a point to drop him a note tonight before I knock off a column for next week's enterprise.



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Although he left early this morning for Shreveport, J. H. had not returned by supper time tonight. The business of the day up there was supposed to center on the financial settlement, hinging on the divorce. In view of the quaint elements involved, such a day of bickering ought to be productive of headaches if nothing else. A short time back, Sister was still holding to the strange notion that while the nursing home they owned in Shreveport might be turned over to the doctor, the operation of the place would be placed in her hands. Imagine such a business. Two or three years ago, the nursing home faced collapse because Sister who thought she could run it, succeeded only in running away all the staff, reminding one, among other things that one thing worse than a nursing home without patients would be a nursing home with patients and nobody to care for them. Joe says J. H. loves it when there's a family squabble going on and he is in the midst of it. In spite of his delicate physical status, he really should have had quite a fine time today, if Joe's statement has any merit which I doubt.

The scuffle goes on in the New Orleans schools continues although the number of pupils attending school today was something like 24 children out of a normal one thousand attendance. I assume most parent are keeping their offspring at home until the rumpus quiets down. To add to the general excitement, however, the Citizens Council has summoned a mass meeting for tonight. That ought to be a great help in whipping the crackpot into a lather. I suppose this is some of Cousin Emmet's smart work. Well, I say to hell with Cousin Emmet.

On the local scene, it is said that about three hundred and fifty thousand pounds of pecanes have been gathered and that the crop is probably about half garnered. The demand for the product is so great that one seldom sees a pecane for more than a few minutes. Field hands gather pecanes from the ground, placing them in sacks which, at certain hours during the morning and afternoon, are brought to the pecane house adjoining the store where the sacks are weighed, each picker paid and big long distance hauling trucks back up to the building and swallow up whatever is to hand and vanishes up the road. So things

11801

10840

Wednesday, November 16th, 1960.

Memorandum:

We had a nice half inch rain sometime between 1 and 3 this morning. The air cooled pleasantly and in the light of a cloudless dawn, I discovered lots of the Chinese magnolia leaves had fallen during the night. The sun was so pleasant this afternoon and tonight the stars are plentiful. We are promised several days of fair, mild weather.

My telephone seems to be acting strangely of late. Tonight, for example, my 'phone rang thrice in five minute intervals. Each time it was Kansas City calling J. H., with the operator declaring each time that she had dialed 8042 but each time got the response from 8043. J. H.'s 'phone does not ring when my number is called, although we are on the same party line, and mine doesn't ring when anyone is calling him.

While jumping into the coffee cups across the fence this morning, the 'phone over yonder rang and that call was for me and so I don't pretend understanding any of it.

My morning coffee call was from Sterling Evans, calling from Houston and asking if he could get 24 boxes of Primitive Stationary with the illustrations exclusively being Land of Uncle. I told him I would let him know on Friday and immediately dropped Ola Mae a special delivery to see what her office would have to say. I expect that was probably stupidity of the first water on my part, -- expecting a response from that quarter but as the letter should have been in her hands by 4 this afternoon, assuming her to be in Louisiana, I shall perhaps find out by Friday if I'm going to hear or not.

I was glad to see J. H. tonight at supper. He said his day in Shreveport had been incredible. He said he used to think Sister was just naturally disagreeable but it is obvious to him now that she is merely damned mean. She performed outrageously all day, he said, and he expressed surprise at all the pulling and hauling that



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is going on over the division of property, as between husband and wife. And then, just to bring things to a nice boil, Lloyd, in whose name the doctor at one time had made some investments to avoid income tax, is now threatening to take his Papa to Court to produce the money because Lloyd wants to have a baby and seems to have found some willing victim. Two of Shreveports best lawyers are representing the contending sides in the divorce matter and J. H. said they had said quite frankly they couldn't for the life of them imagine how any man could ever have made it a day with Sister. That 21 years should have witnessed the union seems incredible to J. H. now.

I. S. Willard just called and ranged about over a wide landscape of conversation, consuming a little over an hour. She had just been talking with her daughter-in-law, Suzanne, from Virginia. Now that the Willards have made I. S. Willard a grandmother a couple of times, they seem to be growing domestically inclined and are building a house at Virginia Beach. I suppose a Commander in the Navy must have a home as well as other people but I have always wonder that this should be so, what with their job forever keeping them transferring about the world so that a thing called home much be much like that of a turkey who is inclined to fold up his beard where ever night happens to catch up with him. I still marvel that anyone who is sole heir to millions should waste his time fooling around with the Armed Services as a career when his financial security guarantees him against worries, thereby enabling him to explore endless the billions of things other than being bundled up with anything so dull as the existence of a naval officer's existence.

The New Orleans racial rumpus continues and I'm glad Morrison is the Mayor of the city for he will do much to hold things down. If he had been selected Governor instead of Jimmy Davis, none of the present racket would be going on since he most certainly would

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10842

Thursday, November 17th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Skies cloudy, the thermometer in the 50's.  
The banana leaves remain crisp and green but pecanec and such like are beginning to thin out considerably

So many ladies in the Parish I know seem to be having so many problems. For the first time in months, I guess, I had a 'phone call from Mrs. Coombs this morning. After being in the Hachitoches hospital, she was transferred a few weeks back to the Baptist hospital in Alexandria, returning home only yesterday. She had many problems to enumerate and spun them off so fast that I had to tell her twice before I could make her understand I had guests and should prefer to call her back. I shall do that on the morrow. Her husband is ailing, her mother dying, her daughter getting a divorce and so on and so forth.

Over the coffee cups, I learned that the lady doctor continues to have domestic cares, with on seemingly getting a little less stable mentally as time progresses. She has confided to acquaintances in town that his wife is putting poison in the medicine she is giving him. Unfortunately the lady doctor is madly in love with him, even as both of them are in love with their adopted child so that the rumors he sets foot about her trying to kill him cuts doubly deep. His mother excepted to fly in from California today but what, if any, good that will do, is anybody's guess. The Worsleys have no money, that is mother and son, and so of course depend on the lady doctor in large measure. There's a lack of harmony between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law and that tends to increase the strain.

There are other ladies whom I know less well who seem to be having their problems, too, leading me to conclude that, as the old axiom has it, everybody's got 'em and, on examination of the other fellow's nobody would care to exchange his own for others who seem to be in an ever worse plight.

Sombody quoted Sister today as having remarked the other night that she didn't know about Thanksgiving but supposed



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she would have to be spending it alone with her daughter  
and with her son who wants to have a baby. I suppose  
we shall be hearing the same thing about Christmas almost  
any day, as soon as we have all had the annual  
scuffle with the Great American bird a week from today.

I read a little more from Mrs. Bowen's  
Adventures of a Biographer last night. I was  
delighted she had something to say about her  
encounters with Henry Adams while she was doing research in  
the Massachusetts Historical Society library in Boston.  
She mentions one of Henry's peculiarities that was  
new to me. She said that whenever he encountered anyone  
and it appeared there was going to be a conversation,  
he immediately removed his hearing aid so that the person  
would have to shout at him. I always suspected  
Henry of being different but I had never thought of him  
as resorting to such a method to take the starch out of  
anyone with whom he might not want to engage in  
argument. He refused to let Mrs. Bowen see a section  
of the John Adams diary that had never been printed but  
three weeks later, following her final encounter with Henry,  
she received a letter from him containing a transcript  
of all the material she had wanted to examine. Verily,  
Henry was certainly a sight.

A week ago, Mrs. Spinks mentioned in a letter that  
the artist had been painting some pictures for her and  
if she came over here to pick them up, she would  
phone me from the artist's to see if I might have  
time to talk with her about her manuscript. She said  
the artist had reported they were ready. I called  
the artist and said I would send the picture to Texas for her  
if she wished, --she finding it difficult to wrap them,  
and that I would offer to do so to Mrs. Spinks if that was  
all right with the artist. The artist said it was and  
that the pictures were already paid for. I wrote Mrs.  
Spinks accordingly and explained some details about American  
Express. This noon the artist phoned to say she had had  
a letter from the picture lady who said it would be all right to  
send the pictures by parcel post and she would bring them to  
me for shipping. She did just that and brought me the  
letter which I haven't read as yet but I have read the  
return address on it which is from some New Orleans Art dealer,  
and now I shall get the artist and her customers  
straightened out, I do not know, but I'm not packing  
shipments for any New Orleans Art dealers, don't you think so..

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Friday, November 18th, 1950.

Memorandum:  
A nice of rain fell between late night and early morning  
with sprinkles lasting until mid morning, followed by a  
cloudy afternoon with stars beginning to peep through  
thin veils of pale organdy tonight at 9.

After 9 o'clock coffee this morning, I put on my  
raincoat and walked over ~~the~~ to the artist's house to see  
if I could make any sense out of the picture mix-up.  
I couldn't. It did appear, however, that the 4 pictures she  
asked me to ship were intended for ew Orleans although she  
didn't know it. There were two pairs of finished pictures  
at her house, one pair being for one lady whose identity she  
knew not and the other pair for another lady who had sent the canvases  
but she had lost her address and didn't know where she lives but  
she wasn't sure which pair was for which lady, making the  
whole mix-up just as clear as mud.

I knocked off a line to Mrs. Spinks, asking her to play  
I hadn't ever said anything about sending any pictures to her on  
the artist's behalf and suggesting she either claim her pictures  
she thinks may have been painted for her or simply concede the  
whole transaction to be one great big grab bag and  
prepare to convince herself that whatever she gets will be exactly what  
she originally aspired to. I hope I have learned my  
lesson which is clear enough, to wit, that if I have  
any sense, I shall let others transact their business with  
the artist as best they may, even as must I.

I was heartened tonight when on some news program, I heard  
some prominent Jew quoted, recommending  
that now is the right time for President Eisenhower to  
make a statement, urging racial tolerance to everyone and especially  
to the Louisiana State Legislature and the citizens of ew Orleans.  
At least, political considerations couldn't be an excuse at the  
moment for evading such a statement on the part of the President.  
To my way of thinking, one of the major if not the major



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fault of the Eisenhower Administration was the failure of the President to make a strong statement at the time the Little Rock thing was bubbling over. I think I know quite a few people who would have accepted an admonition for tolerance, had it come from the White House but who, being treated only to the ravings of the cheap little old politicians in the fevered excitement of the local squabble, were inclined to let the racial bigots have their own way. Here's a line in the Bible that sums up the thing neatly but I forget the quotation, -- something about the fate of a city being sealed if the watchman fails to sound the trumpet. To my way of thinking, this is the perfect moment for the President to sound off loud and long.

This morning, while en route to see the artist, I encountered one of my less dependable secretaries, all of whom invariably fade out of the picture during pecan gathering time, what with the waking hours filled with concentration on gathering up fulsome sacks that will provide ample funds for fun at the local honkey-tonk when day is done. Because of last night's rain and the morning's continuing sprinkle, this particular youth had been a little slow in finding himself a likely tree for his base of operations. Years ago I accepted this slightly unscientific folk way and, of course, provided the means for bridging the gap when, within another week or two, there will be few if any pecanes left and secretaries will be a drug on the market. Both the secretary and I instinctively halted to exchange greetings after several weeks absence from sight. Because the pattern of absenteeism during pecan time, I wasn't even thinking of the gap but the secretary must have felt a little shamefaced, explaining that gathering pecanes had been making him nervous but expressing the hope he would be feeling alright again within another couple of weeks. I had all I could do to prevent a giggle. I had forgotten how popular that word, nervous, is whenever a poor excuse is thought worth trumping up. Last summer when one or two days grew quite hot, several hoe hands failed to put in an appearance, explaining hoeing made them nervous and at another time, I recall passing a cabin where a mother in the doorway was administering her teenage son to get busy and cut some kindling so she could make biscuits for their supper while the youth was demuring on the ground that cutting kindling made him nervous. Well, I must be nervous.....

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10846

Sunday, November 20th, 1960.  
Memorandum:

Sunny Saturday, showery Sunday. The drizzle began about 7:30 this morning and kept going most of the day with only brief interludes between. It is sprinkling tonight.

Bootsie Gay, --do you remember that strange number who once ran the Candlehop in New Orleans and then faded as far as Denver? Well, she is back in Louisiana again, it seems. This morning Giles Millsbaugh phoned to say he had been in New Orleans a day or two ago and had visited an art gallery at 514 Bourbon Street which Bootsie Gay is operating. I suppose one might find anything in Bourbon Street, even a gallery, and 514 appears to be right slap in the middle of the honkey-tonk concentration. Giles said there were little tables in the place where, if one felt so inclined, one might have an artist paint his likeness which sounds a little crummy, of course. He said there were some nice paintings on the walls, too, and he had talked with Bootsie and Clementine Hunter pictures had been mentioned. He wondered if I would write to Bootsie about Hunter creations. I certainly would. I shall tell her New Orleans commitments with other galleries must be examined on behalf of the artist and myself and, should circumstances warrant further expansion in the field in the New Orleans area, I shall be glad to let her know. Something tells me circumstances will not warrant, don't you think so?

Ann W. Britton called me on Saturday about some letter for local information she needed and reported that Pat and Juanita B. had had a fine trip to Manhattan, seen a show or two, been to a basketball game, etc., etc., and it seems so odd to go to Manhattan to attend a basketball game.

As usually happens during Thanksgiving week, all Louisiana schools are closed for the entire week this year. The State always gives State employees the Friday following Thanksgiving Day Thursday and the school teachers always seem to arrange a convention, ostensibly for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday which gives the child an entire week without having to bother to learn anything. This ought to be



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auspicious as a cooling off period for the New Orleans schools, following last week's scufflings at the Legislature seems to be going right on passing strange roadsides which amount to nothing except as examples of what stupid politicians of the cheaper variety can think up. I am of a mind to write a letter to the Tom Jewels, sending it to New Roads. As Tom is Speaker of the House, it seems to me mighty timely that he should be receiving a blast from at least one resident of the State who is shocked by the tomfoolery going on in Baton Rouge. If I only had time to do a couplet about tomfoolery and tomjewelry, that might be helpful.

Last night I finished La Drunken-Bowen's "Adventures of an Autobiographer". Her next to the last chapter on Isaac Newton seemed less interesting than the other but perhaps that was because I was sleepy, but I got much pleasure out of the final chapter on Sir Thomas Coke, pronounced Cook in England and pronounced Coak in America. I know not what the author entitled this biography but, as in the case of her John Adams, perhaps it is simply called Sir Thomas Coke. I shall write Baton Rouge tonight to see if it has been recorded and I shall also ask about the brothers Rubenstein and if it has been recorded for I should like to read that, too.

I. S. Willard called me Saturday afternoon to report that her Friday night party for the Deblieux wedding pre-nuptial celebrations went off nicely. She got a little involved in explaining about her difficulties in tracking down a few loaves of bread that had not be sliced so that she could cut them three times or twice horizontally, putting in filler of one thing or another, and then mipling the horizontal slabs back into place and then cutting them vertically and somehow it all sounded a little dubiously involved but just so long as the party was a success, that's all that matters. She was leaving at dawning today for Baton Rouge, would see Kay and James tomorrow and be back for the Deblieux wedding on Wednesday. Well, power to her.

Tonight after supper, Celeste confided to me that J. H. had insisted that Sister and the children come down here for the current week since there is no school in Shreveport. Praise the Lord they didn't show up yesterday or today but, then, the week still is young but the mere prospects somehow make it seem a long stretch just ahead.

The artist called me this afternoon, saying Blythe was in her car front of the artist's, and asking if I would meet her at the front gate I did meet her and Joan and Irian. They had come up this morning but were heading home because of the rain. There was a basket of food for me, including much grand sandwiches on which I shall nibble before the night gets very far.....

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Monday, November 21st, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and drear with an occasional sprinkle that nobody wants although it does no one any particular harm.

On a Shreveport news cast this noon, I was perfectly delighted with one sentence, the only one having to do with the subject to hand so that one might interpret it any way one cared to:

"The delegation from the Louisiana Legislature failed to see President-elect Kennedy yesterday when they called at his Palm Beach vacation spot and left Palm Beach in a huff."

Like a small child suddenly discovering he has unexpectedly become the center of attention because of some outrageous prank he has performed, continues to go further and further into his ridiculous doings, so the current Legislature is behaving and probably couldn't explain their actions to themselves, let alone anyone else. What any sane person in the Legislature could imagine Mr. Kennedy to say that would please them, I cannot imagine and so they left in a huff, knowing perfectly well before they undertook the junket they would get the brush off. Sylvan Friedman was one of the delegation and I shall be glad to take him apart the next time I see him.

I was thinking about the word, pretty, today when, by chance, I heard it used by two different people under different circumstances and so found myself wondering if its use in this area is unique or if pretty is used in other places, too, in somewhat the same fashion.

This morning at breakfast, the cook noticed a little flower embroidered near the pocket of the sport shirt I was wearing and admiringly observed:

"Oh, look at the pretty!"



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This afternoon the artist 'phoned me to say she had just heard from her sister in Alexandria who had asked her to ask me if she might have some gourds. So far as her sister having asked for gourds, that, you may be sure, is a lie the artist thought up, wishing some gourds for herself or somebody and, characteristically on her part, thinking it would be better to drag her sister into the picture. I told her I had no small gourds but that she could have all the large ones she wanted. She said the large ones would be just fine. I asked her what in the world her sister proposed doing with them:

"I don't know," she responded, "but I reckon she probably wants to make a pretty."

In this latter case, a pretty, I assume, may be an arrangement, while in the former it meant a dab of embroidery which, by some stretch of the imagination might seem to be related but certainly not the identical thing. Perhaps the word pretty is like the word package, intended to cover, as the latter does, everything and anything from a niche to a tin roof. I must consult James on this point to see if Hatcher, New Orleans or Baton Rouge lists pretty as a catch or cover word of endless dimension and design.

Having let people from plantations all up and down the river and people from Hatchitoches, too, join the local field hands in picking up pecanes, the result is that the crop is just about gathered and the local people, accustomed to gathering pecanes until the end of the year at least, suddenly find themselves without a source of revenue and accordingly they seem rather resentful about imported labor. To begin feeling the financial squeeze more than a month before Christmas naturally gives them a very unpleasant sensation. But, as the old adage has it: "there's no great loss without some small gain", and something tells me the secretarial situation is likely to improve mightily almost any day now. Ann W. Britton called today to report having seen my likeness in the current issue of *Lovely Louisiana*, a publication whose publication isn't much. I don't know Claydel Morgan who gets it out and I know nobody on the staff and don't need to although I'm curious to know where they got the shot.

10850

12801

Tuesday, November 22nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Sprinkley all day and the promise for its continuance tonight and tomorrow morning when our present pleasant 60's are supposed to sag into the 30's. Winter is bound to come, I reckon, and I am thankful for the continued Indian Summer so late into the season.

It goes without saying I was altogether enchanted today when the postman handed me little Miss Lee's grand letter as of Saturday last past.

Whole heartedly I agree that in business too much is too much and as I contemplate the unending fandango through September and October, I find myself amazed at all one pair of shoulders is expected to bear, plus additional loads when domestic reaction runs contrary to co-operation which is certainly puzzling and maddening alike to both Miss Lee and to me.

And may I thank you for sharing with me the particulars regarding the renewed eruption of Vesuvius. One can manage even the most trying if one but has a kindred soul to whom one can turn and I hold the thought that by some miracle the ladies may somehow escape the fire and ashes that their opposites seem to relish so much. There is something about the whole thing that seems as unnecessary as the current rumpus in the educational field in this area. If only the trouble-makers would just let the dying embers die and not keep stirring them at such a might pitch. If the current tumult can only subside once more, perhaps the final departure of the comparatively inconspicuous character around which it all centered will adjust things in such a fashion as to prevent a re-kindling. It goes without saying that I shall count it an honor if little Miss Lee feels the impulse to let me know from time to time how things turn in this unpleasant business for, as I need scarcely remark, everything that tends to cast shadows over her landscape is of prime concern to me.

It was so kind of you to mention particulars regarding Kennedy family connections abroad and to enclose



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the clipping containing material about which I knew nothing but which I am very glad indeed to learn about. My curiosity was aroused when the Radzwill name cropped up but I used to know a lady by that name in Paris who, if still on earth, would probably be in the bracket of the great grandmother by this late date. The lady I knew had kept a Journal and was preparing it for publication when I knew her but, I'm ashamed to confess, I have forgotten if it ever appeared or not but it seems to me it did and was said to have been excellent. I guess the reason I am uncertain about it stems in part from the fact that she was so kind as to tell me much about its contents while it was still in manuscript form and, as I have discovered in parallel cases, as for instance, with Lyle, who would read and discuss a manuscript with me to the end that when the thing appeared in print, I would often find myself wondering what he included and what he removed and how this was altered and that changed. It's so odd I don't even recall how this "Radzwill" lady got to Paris but it seems to me she was with the mother of Czar Nicholas 2nd and came via the Black Sea, Constantinople and so on to the Riviera when everything went to smash. In 1917 I tried to make a little sense out of the wild trip to the water's edge and see if I could fit it in with the terrific program that has been building up during the past months but I couldn't. Every moment of rest that could be garnered wouldn't be enough but the added all night hejira is really something to puzzle over with no hope of unraveling it. It is bound to be interesting to contact a person who has traveled so widely and who turns up within sight of the metropolis so infrequently but, on the other hand, there is the sandman offering sleep to the weary and I think that on occasion the latter should be accorded priority.

What with Wednesday's out-going mail being the last before Thanksgiving, it goes without saying that there will be no activity on the part of the postal boys on Thursday although, I am told, the plantation will be operating as usual. I am glad there will be Friday and Saturday out-going, however, and the regularity of the post is always a comfort, even though everything else may be by sixes and sevens at

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Wednesday, November 23rd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and damp but pleasantly mild in the thermometer section.

Thanksgiving Eve seems to have settled down mildly enough although the day did start off with a funeral. Yesterday Andy brought me a fine black cat to frolic and hand ends with Grandpa. Andy said the cat had been crying quite a lot during the past two days but that it was a fine cat and half brother of Grandpa and equally coal black and he thought everyone would be pleased. The cat seemed to like his new surroundings and I liked the cat but during the night he simply passed out along the front gallery and so there was a funeral before breakfast, I serving in the combined role of undertaker, grave digger, officiating clergyman and chief, which is to say, sole mourner. And so our little friend sleeps tonight beneath the banana hedge with a fine spray of scarlet pyrocanthus berries to embellish the grave.

Grandpa was helpful by way of assisting as I dug the grave but he didn't care for the burial and, instead, went for a frolic with the duck which I thought was just as well.

It is said we shall be honored on the morrow, perhaps in the afternoon, by the Krevueport contingent which is scheduled to remain for the balance of the week. So far as I know, there aren't any special festivities being planned although I have no doubt the visitors will provide ample entertainment. Whether there will be a repeat performance a week hence when fireworks on Saturday night will usher in the turning on of the Christmas lights in town, I know not. There have been occasions when that celebration has exerted as strong a magnet to attract people from up the road to see same as an excuse for putting in an appearance. Whether it will still provide such a drawing exertion, slap on the heels of the present week end, I can only guess but I'd rather not give the matter any thought at all.



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For no reason in particular, I decided today would be the magical moment to gather this year's crop of quinces which I did and which I have installed in two big baskets in the fireplaces in both the boudoir and living room and a marvelous aroma permeates Yucca in consequence of their presence. The big old quince tree on which I concentrated produced fruit, looking somewhat like pears, that ranged in dimension from about the size of one's fist to globes perhaps a quarter larger than the biggest grapefruit one ever saw. They are a deep cream in coloring and in each fancy basket, holding a bushel and a half each, I placed a couple of egg plants of imperial purple, a curved gourd of golden brown, a little larger than the Analusian one you have, a few sprays of pale green leaves from the pomegranate, with a bow of yellow ribbon on the handle of each basket and I must say they look as spiffy as any autumnal decors should look.

The colder weather heading our way somehow got short-circuited by the flow of warm air from the Gulf that produced the clouds while tempering the Canadian blast and to see everything on the landscape appear so lush and green is a Thanksgiving delight that is unusual in the river country.

The socially inclined must be concentrated heavily in the Hatchitoches area tonight, what with the Ann Deblieux wedding scheduled for 5 o'clock, to be followed by a reception at the home of the bride trailing out into the night. A couple of people called from town to ask if I would attend if a car were sent for me. I wouldn't. Over coffee this morning I had been asked if I didn't want to attend but, of course, I had declined. I am sure it is all turning out quite darling but it is bad enough to have to attend the nuptials of people one knows and, in the present case, while I am acquainted with the parents, the bride is a person I have never laid eyes on. I did my duty by sending a gift, in

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Thursday, November 24th, 1950.

Memorandum:

Mostly cloudy the greater part of the day, the cloudiness being of the thin variety that kept out the sun, threatened no rain and then at dusk dark vanished, leaving a fine new moon in a cloudless sky above a spring-like landscape that is made the more pleasant by the mildness of the temperature.

At the coffee hour, I learned that the pleasant aroma permeating the house was rising from the oven where some fine ducks, Mallards, I believe, were roasting. J. H. and Celeste dined alone at noon and the clerk and I dined alone at the big house. In lieu of turkey, we enjoyed a very nice pork roast and instead of pumpkin pie, we had custard pie. J. H., the clerk and I supped together at which time J. H. said the Winks were expected in force around 8 o'clock. It is now 9 but I see no lights at the big house. Perhaps everybody is across the fence or perhaps nobody has arrived as yet.

Except for those mentioned above, the only other human beings I have seen today were two or three of my negro friends whom I was very glad to commune with, one just back from prison, one from an asylum and so on.

There were three calls from town, inviting me to afternoon Thanksgiving dinners at the respective homes of the caller and both Mr. and Mrs. Walker called early this morning, asking if I cared to join them at home tonight to have a go at a feast but, naturally, I declined. I understand the Walkers always have marvelous food and I should enjoy being with them almost but not quite so much as being at home alone. One thing about the Walkers that I like very much is their cordiality in inviting me on occasion and at the same time their respect for my preference to "stay put", giving us a chance to carry on a civilized conversation without all the pulling and hauling that social invitation issuers are inclined to indulge in.



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If I don't forget it, I shall enclose arecent letter from la Whitehead who, like Madam Moore, seldom gets around to rite but when she does, is inclined to produce a book. From this one, you will notice she seems to be laying out quite a program for herself in the years ahead. I shall write her, congratulating her on her intentions which are intentions that are likely to be carried out. I am told she spells various words in a somewhat original style but she is an original person to start with, so this is just as it should be. She rented Carolyn's apartment one summer when, while her school-teaching job was in abeyance, she held down a job in a New Orleans radio station. She is like that and will probably having a grand time where ever she finds herself on either side of the Atlantic. It just occurs to me that I should like to hear her last name, Whitehead, pronounced by natives of the various countries in Europe where her travels will take her.

I wasn't at all surprised at coffee time to learn that last evening's wedding had been perfectly darling. Since everybody was there, one didn't have to inquire about the identity of those assisting. The only family that remains in my memory of the long list recited was that of the Worsleys. I was happy to hear that aside from the lady doctor, Don, their daughter, and Don's mother were at the church. Perhaps they attended the reception at the home of the bride afterward, for when I asked Celeste how Don was looking, she said she must say that he didn't look well, and that somehow "he seemed sort of stand-off-ish", which certainly must have been at the reception part of the festivities. Like everybody else, the lady doctor obviously has her problems.

As between this and the foregoing paragraph, I. S. Willard called. She had gone to see Kay and James on Tuesday and was delighted to find them both so gay and Kay reporting improvement. She says Kay plans to take her nurse with her and head out for The Bluff for Christmas and that James will spend Christmas with the Mahiers. Of course, it seems to me he doesn't skip over to Charleston with Kay but perhaps he knows what he is doing. In any event, the pair seem very happy and that is all that matters. On Kay's return, they will get busy about buying a new house or even an old one is they can find one with a courtyard in town and why the courtyard

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Friday, November 25th, 1960.

Memorandum:

A beautiful day and tonight is equally so, what with the temperature around 70 and the moon perfectly mellow without any of the birttle brilliance that so often November season.

I haven't seen any of today's major newspapers and so have no idea how much space was allotted to the advent of John F. Kennedy, jr, assuming the stork delivered the blessed bundle in time for morning editions to get it into print before their deadlines ran out. As for the radio, it seems to have placed the event right up in the front row and one can but be impressed again on the power of a babe to side-track more ponderous matters. Perhaps every successful candidate for the Presidency of the United States should arrange with his wife to have his first son during the same month he gets elected. I'm not sure it would make the opposition any happier with the new Administration but it seems to me that perhaps the electorate in general might more quickly forget the heat of the September and October campaign if a November birth of an heir could divert memories of all the oratory by an intimate event in the winner's family in the same month as the election.

The visitation anticipated last night did indeed take place, what with mother and daughter arriving around 8 or 9. There must have been a slight brush of personalities as between the mother and her sister-in-law across the fence during the evening but, although I have heard plenty about it from both sides, it appears to have been one of those things about nothing worth an argument but nevertheless as devastating. It is my understanding we shall continue to be honored into Sunday at least. The mother in some heat declared to me today she hoped she could hurry up and sell her house up yonder so she could come here to live, enabling her thus to take pot shots at her sister-in-law. You can see readily enough how ducky it all is.



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Some friends of Blythe passed this way this afternoon, a Mrs. Foot, her married daughter, both of Alexandria, and some other lady with them, hailing from Richmond. The daughter told me that Ed Rand, as representative, received a telegram from them during the current session, asking him to preserve public schools no matter what, and that Ed Rand had told them that theirs was the only telegram not supporting the efforts being made by the State Government to maintain the school system. Knowing the racial bias, as perhaps quite a few of Ed's constituents do, it isn't surprising that he should have made such a statement which is probably quite true, even if it doesn't excuse the stupidity of the stand.

Last summer J. H. found some fine big blackberries somewhere in his travels and must have ordered some bushes which probably came in today's post and were sent to me. I planted them but I don't expect to do much about cultivating berry bushes in gardens where there are so many other plants that require much less struggle to keep out of the brambles. Sister also brought some plants and I was happy the weather was so favorable for transplanting although I assume the first frost will flatten the plants for this season, at least as they are a muget type on a larger scale and probably incapable of withstanding much cold above ground and are without adequate sub-soil equipment in their present stage to catch hold before the cold weather settled down in earnest.

Carmen called me tonight to tell me what a fine job she and two or three associated had done this noon in a TV program over an Alexandria station. Their purpose was to advertise the festivities in town on Saturday night, December 3rd, when the bombs and rockets will be bursting in air and the annual lighting program for the month of December gets under way. It seems to me I went through a TV program in behalf of Pilgrimage a few years back and I found the whole business a bore but Carmen never seems to tire of her work before the camera. If I remember correctly, Helma Kyser and Rosalyn Aswell participated in the program that included me. I must inquire of someone if Rosalyn is still with us or if she and her mother and uncle finally got off for Georgi. -- I hope. And now to some mail, -- all secretaries were frightened off today, and so it will be only some neglected stuff from earlier in

10801

10858

Nov. 27th, 1960

Sunday, November <sup>27</sup>~~28~~th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Incredible summer weather with doors and windows all open and, oddly enough, Shreveport reporting warmth in excess of 20 degrees above Alexandria, suggesting that the farther North you go, the warmer it gets. But the radio assures us that a cold snap is edging down from the Canadian border so I suppose winter will arrive eventually regardless. In the mean time, I must say I am enjoying the last of the summer.

The Wenks got off Saturday evening and I reckon we shall not see them again before Friday or Saturday when they threatened to return to observe the Hatchitoches fireworks.

The reports from the San Antonio suggest the General is doing alright. He seems to have had an operation of some sort to remove a stone from a neck gland and I believe this operation from inside will be followed by another from the outside near the jaw and what it is all about, I haven't the slightest idea.

When I strolled across the fence for dinner today, I encountered guests next door, -- Payne's former wife and husband, one Perkle or some such, of Baton Rouge. There was much talk about their September jaunt through Europe and endless discussions about which stocks are best to invest in and so on. It was all pretty dull stuff for one who isn't so interested in playing the market as in hoping to get a bite of food.

Eventually they left and I got the food and after returning here, I spent a little while with I.S. Willard who had come down to get some gourds to decorate a balcony of her house. While we were busy selecting likely material, Mrs. Mabury of Shreveport, and old and boring acquaintance appeared with Dr. Robb, the psychiatrist of Shreveport. Anybody in the physical or mental bracket of therapeutics certainly has a nerve to bear such a name as Robb, it seems to me, for the Lord knows, most of them live up to all the implications of such a name.



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The trouble with la Maybry is that she never knows when to leave and she was still here when Carmen 'phoned to say she and her sister would like to drive down to pick up some gourds if I didn't mind. I didn't mind giving them the gourds but I did object to giving them the time they would take up and then followed through on their customary pattern.

I. S. Willard brought me a copy of the sheet she is sending out to somebody or something. With la Maybry making so much of a stir, I never did understand what it was all about but perhaps you will be interested in glancing through it. I am not interested and I do not want it back.

It seems a little odd to me that I haven't heard anything on the radio to give any hint that any of the newly formed African countries are changing the names of their cities, a custom that seems to have been followed so often in other countries of the world when new political parties have taken over or one time colonies have made their bow as independent States, --Leningrad and all the rest of the Russian cities, for example. In a way, it seems rather remarkable that in the Congo, for instance, where Belgians seem out of favor at the moment, the three major cities still remain or retain their names which commemorate two Belgian Kings and a Belgian Queen, --Leopoldville, Albertville and Elizabethville. I, for one, find there are enough new names getting into the press in the mere recitation of the leading politicians, the Casabubus, Carumbas and such like, without making things more difficult by coming up with a whole flock of new city names to boot. I was never much in favor of changing city names anyway, and Leningrad sounds awful to me and awfully stupid, too, when I ponder of Saint

10860

10860

Monday, November 28th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Most of the day was so much like yesterday's with the thermometer at 80 that cooler air this evening seems quite pleasant. I reckon it will be cold by morning. It was said cold Arctic air rolled over Dallas at 4 this morning, reaching Shreveport by 10 o'clock. As I recall, Monroe is about 100 miles due east of Shreveport. At noon today it was 77 in Monroe, 52 in Shreveport. We shall get something like a 34 degree reading before morning which will represent the ushering out of our prolonged Indian Summer, I suppose.

I am putting a copy of this year's Christmas lights festival program in the mail. So far as I know, there's nothing of any particular interest in it and so if you don't get around to glance at it, I think you will have missed nothing.

I asked about Rosalyn today when talking with town and was told that an uncle, a banker in Georgia, had died while her mother and her other uncle were here and that they had all three gone off to Georgia about November 11th. Rosalyn left the job of renting her house to Johnny Macker, a local lawyer of dubious standing, saying she would be gone indefinitely. Thelma, who never seems to get enough to look after, promised Rosalyn she would rent her an apartment in her house when she returned, if she cared to have same. The Kysers have a home somewhere near Ora which they are not occupying since they must live at the President's residence at the college and take it from the above statement they have converted the place into apartments. So much for Rosalyn for the moment, at least. If she continues to find herself possessed of relatives in Georgia, I hope she remains there with them so they may look after her when she flies off on one of her benders. She has good friends in Hatchitoches, of course, but they are bound to respect her independence, of course, and so are often more isolated from her than members of her own family would be.

And speaking of one disorganized female reminds me to remark that Sister the other day was complaining because Dr. Wenk had recently lost twenty nine thousand dollars of her money playing the stock market. I learn from another source that the doctor did, indeed, lose some money on some stocks but won on



10861

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I. S. Willard called as I was turning this page. I must confess I sometimes do a bit of wool-gathering when things get a little uncertain in my mind as to where she is going and what she plans to do, as between now and Christmas, and at such times I find myself coming up with the most unrelated topics, as, tonight, when I suddenly tossed three Venetian hitching posts for gondolas which I quite unexpectedly told her she should have turned at some local lumber yard, painting them black, except for two or three brilliant stripes at the top, with all three post being set in at appropriate angles where her lawn touches the margin of the river just behind her house. She was filled with delight at the suggestion and asked what she was going to do for a gondola, and I told her that if anyone noticed there was none tied to the posts, she should explain I had borrowed it to transport my unicorn from its seasonal grazing grounds to its new seasonal pasture, providing ample latitude for any old time of the year that anyone should chance to ask.

She invited me to come up for the lights on Saturday night but naturally I refused although someday I must pass by her house to see if she has enough gourds to decorate the place properly and to give her a further push about the touch of old Venice on her doorstep but after the holidays will be amply soon for that.

Tonight for the first time I listened to the new news program on CBS which has extended his on the hour news reports from five to ten minute periods. I liked what I had to hear and although I got lost so far as readily finding *The World Tonight* and one or two other features, I finally discovered them for much re-arrangement seems to have been effected in this innovation for greater on the hour news coverage.

The State Legislature seems to be drawing in its horns a bit regarding the week end intention to instruct Louisiana electors not to cast their ballots for Mr. Kennedy. There was been quite a scuffle going on as a result of the Legislature removing funds from the New Orleans School Board so teachers couldn't be paid but in today's session in Baton Rouge, the legislators didn't forget to vote themselves four hundred twenty thousand dollars for the ir own expenses during the present special session which has done nothing but stir up confusion.

Tonight I hunted up the ancient Dutch oven and have had a potato baking in it for a midnight snack, suggesting that the winter season has really arrived. I hope the snow doesn't travel as far east as Lyme.....

10862

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P. S. Conservation Magazine, under separate cover, is sent merely because it carries picture of the ocket and of no special interest, unless there be something about her oyster film and need not be examined too particularly or preserved.

Tuesday, November 29th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Clear and somewhat "air-ish", although I hold the thought it may not freeze although it appears it will get pretty close to it.

The sun was so bright and the breeze so bracing, I had in mind to do a heap of things in the great out of doors today but I accomplished very little.

Right after dinner this noon, Dr. Caroline Talley of New Orleans came, bringing Dr. Andrew Tolheim with her and half an hour later Blythe and Joan put in an appearance, with everyone staying until quite late and, what with the days being so short, there seemed to be no time left for attempting anything out of doors although the moon is so big and bright, I guess I could accomplish a few things, were it not that I must knock off a column and attend to some mail after that.

Blythe said she was still in Shreveport this past week end when Sister got back to town. Sister called her and seemed to be a bit on the high side, telling her she had had two painful eye operations during the week and was expecting to have another in a day or two. Obvious this was something she had come up with out of the bottom of the bottle. Blythe said that Whitfield was earning his money as Sister's alwyer and expressed the opinion that she was definiely insane.

She had asked Blythe to come over but Blythe was going out to dinner and so declined. She called Sister the next day before leaving town but her daughter said that her mama was asleep, having taken some more "medecine", it seemed and that was that.

Tonight's radio continues reporting rumpuses going on in the New Orleans school picture. I haven't heard any reports over the air mention one important point that people having friends with children involved are reporting. This is to the effect that an almost insignificant number of parents of the New Orleans school children are participating in the racket going on. There are plenty of screaming women appearing



10863

at the schools but these females, it is reported, come from outside the city, mostly from an adjoining parish where Leander Perez is the political boss. He is an old Huey P. Long crone but unlike Long, he believes in stirring up racial animosities to keep his grip on his Parish and his fist is as firm and tight as that of most successful political bosses of the Huey P. Long persuasion. For decades, he has been District Attorney of his Parish, during which he has invariably rolled up tremendous majorities on every election and J. H. says everyone knows Leander has voted tombstones from the very beginning. This past year, he voluntarily gave up his post as District Attorney, graciously turning it over to another candidate, one supposes, of his own choosing, for after all, the new District Attorney is none other than Leander Perez, junior. This latter undoubtedly does his papa's bidding while Leander, senior, continues cracking the whip and making the cajuns within his domain jump crooked.

A violent racial bigot, Persez, senior, it is said, sends the wives of his henchmen across the Parish line into the New Orleans school districts where the present tug-of-war is going on to discourage the parents of children who should be most concerned about the safety of their children, --discouraging them from sending their children to the New Orleans schools while old Perez provides buses, --you may be sure at a staggering profit to himself, to transport New Orleans children over into his Parish to attend private schools.

By the above statement, I do not mean to imply that all the mobs members causing so much racket come from outside the city of New Orleans but it is said that the leaders of the noisey groups that whip up excitement are from the Perez province and that the continued difficulties are to be laid slap at the Perez doorstep. No wonder Perez is one of the South's most r. big exponent of States Rights.

10864

Wednesday, November 30th, 1950.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold. The absence of a butterfly lily as an enclosure indicates, of course, that Jack Frost arrived with the close of November. I always regret the passing of Indian Summer but the fact that we were given an extra month this year makes me grateful it lingered on so long.

Yesterday, after having heard nothing from the Lost Word about the Evans order of last week for primitive note paper, I finally felt forced to 'phone Shreveport, following another call from Houston regarding the matter. Ola Mae wasn't in but first one secretary and then another assured me a note would be put in the mail as soon as Ola Mae returned from lunch which was then 3:30. Well, the morning mail arrived on time today and, as I had anticipated, there was nothing from the Advertising Art. Tonight, however, about 8:45, there was a call from Ola Mae who said the merchandise could be forwarded at once and that she would be glad to ship it directly to Houston. I told her that the Evanses had left Houston yesterday for Little Eva and she had better send it here. She said it would be here in the morning but I don't see how she can make such a delivery but I shall accept her word, even though I don't expect it.

I referred to my last letter to her, --the one covering the note paper order in which I asked her to mention pecanes to Carolyn if she should chance to see her. She said Carolyn was in Shreveport Monday but that she had not mentioned pecanes to her. She said Carolyn had headed South with a view to getting a film contract to do tide lands. I know not if this be a State thing or an oil propomotion. In the mean time, the pecanes are finished and she can now wait for another year to get the shots she wanted for The World of Clementine Hunter. How those gals don't do business is wonderful.



10865

10865

Ann Williams Britton called from the Chamber of Commerce to give many particulars about what she and her husband have been up to. They went to Bastrop on Monday for some civic-political pow-wow and Jack had delivered my message to the Bastrop town fathers which I had sent along. Bastrop, you may recall, was the place Aaron Burr had his Louisiana land holdings, prior to his abortive attempt to set up an empire in Mexico. I suggested that Bastrop would do well to underline its Burr connections and erect a statue in his memory, not only as a reminder of an historical fact in the town's development but also to give the place a heap of free advertising for my guess is that nobody ever erected a statue to Aaron Burr while the controversy about his shadowy dealings will probably buzz on forever.

Ann says the Enterprise is publishing a solid page or two of the Louis Hardini, sr., material which is currently being broadcast over the local radio station, one hour a night for eight successive broadcasts. I think there are a few errors and a lot of extraneous stuff but the whole batch of stuff represents a great wealth of material and I shall secure a copy of the Enterprise publication to add to your Natchitoches Collection forthwith.

Ann also broke down when she thought of the two pictures she had been asked to have the local artist paint for Ralph McGill of the Atlanta Constitution. She hadn't been able to get any canvas and as I had a couple of suitable boards, I told her I would take over the transaction for her if she wished me to and she did. The artist is probably taking a swing at them right now as she likes to paint at night and I got the material to her this afternoon.

I was invited to the reception for the radio and press being held at the Elks Club at the gathering of the fireworks doings on Saturday but I shall not go, of course. There are usually some pleasant people invited to this annual reception and it is said the radio is having representatives from quite remote places and some of these I should like to chat with, were there not all the other excitement attendant upon that occasion.

We are going to get another freeze tonight and it will remain cold through the week end, fair and cool and the fair part will be helpful to the

10866

10866

Thursday, December 1st, 1960.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold. It will sink to 20 tonight and is already well on the way down. But the moon is full and makes things so lovely, one doesn't mind the cold so much because of the beauty spread across the landscape. The editorial section of today's Enterprise, much of the Hardini material covering the history of Natchitoches has been printed. I am enclosing an extra copy of this printed material in this letter, thinking you might find it convenient to have an extra copy to glance at without having to be confined to the paper itself.

I have written a note of congratulation to Mr. Hardini on his broadcasts which are among the duller things I have ever heard over the air but which merit commendation because, as in the printed version, I suppose, it is simply data without too much rhyme or reason for the presence of much of it. One does write off a mountain, however, merely because it contains a lot of earth and stone if, somewhere in the mound there are deposits of precious minerals.

I do not recommend that you wade through the printed material either with any sense of urgency but I do think that you will find it convenient to glance at occasionally to get some notion as to how things shaped up in this area, discounting the timeliness of the facts as set forth in such a hodge-podge.

Mrs. Walker told me today that when presented with the material, she felt it deserved editing and should not be published until it had been and that she had not time under present pressures to attend to such a job. Mr. Walker, however, felt that it should be published regardless so that it might be given to many of the sixty thousand pilgrims attending the fireworks festivities on Saturday night. And so the whole business was dumped into type and while I think Mrs. Walker had an excellent point, still I'm glad the material is in print form and therefore made available for future historians to work over.



38801

10867

J. H. went to New Orleans early this morning with Jerry Pratt and Celeste, accordingly, decided to remain in town with one of her girl friends tonight. Raymond Breazeale phoned me tonight, asking for J. H.'s New Orleans address. Raymond is a little worried about J. H., thinking he looks far from well. Everyone agrees it is the Wenk rumpus that is pulling him down for although he jokes about their ridiculous performances, he is nevertheless disturbed by them.

Father Calahan came to see me this afternoon. He says he is tired of a book he is doing on mathematics but is going to stick with it since it appears that he may be able to finish it within the month if he sticks with it. We talked politics mostly and I didn't bring up the notable event taking place in Rome tomorrow when the heads of the Catholic and Anglican Churches get together, -- a heartening gesture, it seems to me. There has always been too much animosity between all so-called Christian institutions and if tomorrow's meeting serves no more than a gesture, the outward symbol of civilized respect is something for which we should all be thankful.

Today's post did not bring the package from Ola Mae that supposedly had been mailed in Shreveport yesterday. Perhaps it will come tomorrow. There was a package from Mrs. Pinks, -- cake and pickles and I was glad she had jumped the gun on Christmas since a heap of perishable food arriving at the same time a couple of weeks hence can be much better managed if spread out a little.

interruption....I. S. Willard.....

That lady is back after a woady whirl through North Louisiana where she met several people planning to attend the Shreveport conference and making a round of a famous Shreveport a sure visitation and so on. Oh, Lord, what with I'm going to be slain.

38801

10868

Friday, December 2nd, 1960.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold with the thermometer at 24 this morning and the banana and butterfly lily stalks but thoroughly cooked. I saw the great golden disk rising from out of the Red River swamps tonight and it was as pretty a moonrise as I can remember. Grandpa walked over to Ghana with me but he wasn't paying much attention to the heavenly parade, being too busy frolicking round after rabbits who had been sampling onion stalks in the several parterres. I wonder if he ever catches any. Probably he does but he seems to enjoy the frolic more than anything else.

J. H. returned from New Orleans where he had gone, probably for several reasons, not the least of which was to consult a heart specialist. According to J. H., and he probably understated the specialist's report, he was found to have a heart condition and was admonished to slow down. One thing a out J. H. that is unique for a person so energetic is the fact that whenever there is anything wrong with him, he will consult a physician. But having done that, he proceeds to pay no attention to their advice so that his consultations seem to be pretty much worthless. It seems to me it wasn't so long ago when the doctor put him in the hospital for a few days and J. H. accepted the dictum but thought nothing at all about getting out of bed, going to town, getting shave, transacting business and thence back to his hospital bed.

Even as in the case of his mama, so it is with him, -- what is obviously folly to others is accept as such by the patient who, in turn, goes right on doing those very things guaranteed to make life more difficult for them.

I did a little reading last night and enjoyed what I read. The author's name I know not, -- something like Percalaw or Percalaw or some such. The title of



10869

10869

Friday, December 3rd, 1960

the book give no hint as to its subject, -- Willy Dimoon's Drum, or some such. As I never heard of this youth or why he should have a drum, I had no idea what I would encounter when I started out but I soon discovered that the Diamond youth was a resident of Lexington, Massachusetts, and it was his business to beat his drum when the Minute Men were to be summoned.

The author gives a marvelous picture of the Lexington scene and its inhabitants in 1775, and then proceeds to sketch in biographical accounts of the main characters who were to participate in the events leading up to the scuffle there in 1775 which triggered the Revolution.

I gather the author has done an endless amount of research and then gone ahead and put it into entertaining prose that enlightens and delights at the same time.

I know not if his slant is correct or not but, if so, one is given to understand that the differences between England and her colonies which had been strained during the preceding decade were about to burst on the verge of being set to rights but that all Sam Adams who had a genius for manipulating mob rule, contrived to galvanize the public resentment against the Crown and whipped up a measure of hysteria about the so-called "Boston Massacre" a little earlier when his cousin, John Adams, had defended the British soldiers in that mix-up. Unlike John, Sam was a failure in everything except his ability to take the pulse of the public and put the various factions into one big group and turn the whole body into anti-colonial efforts, and one is given to understand that it was Sam, who was at Lexington, who gave things a twist that precipitated the disorder which, under the facile pen of Sam could be so "cooked up" as to convince all the other colonists that their own lives and liberties were about to be swept away if they didn't get busy and start marching with the mother country. I suppose some publisher of court inevitable pilgrims who will be coming toward Hatcher's for the light festival in town.....

10870

10870

Sunday, December 4th, 1960.

Memorandum:

May I direct your attention to the fine new ribbon, slap out of Lym.

Yesterday and today have been the two prettiest of the entire autumnal season, -- clear, warm and doubly impressive in view of the cold snap just preceding this week end.

Everybody in town estimates the number of out of town visitors for Saturday, and this year it was between forty thousand and sixty thousand. That is just another way of saying that I had somewhere between forty one and sixty one thousand visitors as a result of the Hatcher's concentration.

I may be over-stating the number a little but there were quite a few people although only a comparatively few got inside the gate and those by appointment. Dan asked me to receive some on Saturday morning, Pat some on Saturday afternoon. Then there were more through Pat on Sunday afternoon early and more later in the day on request of Mr. Hodges who phoned from Many to say Mr. Green, superintendent of Bellanrath Gardens was with him for a day or two and had said he had so much hoped to see just one place in Louisiana and that therefore Mr. Hodges had phoned me to ask if he might. He might.

Mr. Green arrived promptly at the appointed hour of 3, bringing Mrs. Green with him, a Mr. and Mrs. somebody from Mobile and a Mr. and Mrs. somebody else from Memphis. Everybody seemed enchanted with what they had to see and lingered rather longer than I had originally anticipated. It was all very pleasant but they failed in their mission, as they discovered on their departure, for, they admitted, Mr. Hodges had instructed them to kidnap me and bring me back to Many with them. I shall possibly have occasion to see Mr. Hodges before long but not with half a dozen people along.



10871

08801

08801, 12th December, 1960

The Wenks journeyed down from Shreveport on Saturday afternoon, Sister and daughter in one car, Lloyd and girl friend in another. Sister was here for supper. About 9:30, after going back to town for the fireworks, she returned here with daughter to spend the night. Lloyd and girl friend came down, too, but I did not see any of them although they claimed they came over here which I doubt. Lloyd and girl friend returned to Shreveport. This morning Sister came over to invite me to breakfast with her and daughter at the big house. She said Joe had arrived last night. I believe the Wenks pulled about about 11:30. I saw Joe at dinner across the fence. He went to town this afternoon but returned here about 5 and we had a drink together before going across the fence for supper. He said he had come because Pat had written him of P. J. H.'s heart condition. How anybody is going to slow down J. H., I wouldn't know, but surely it will not be J. H., and probably only God. The sister of J. H. is just like his mama in that he thinks himself indestructible and probably will never go slower until stricken. Everybody, however, will clutch at his coat-tails to no avail. Most of us, all of us, in fact, are agreed that his worry over the Wenk performances does more to affect him than his own exertions on other matters.

Bob I talked with Mr. Walker tonight. He said a feeler had been put out by Charles through the good offices of a mutual acquaintance of the Times and Enterprise, hinting that the Times was prepared to purchase the Enterprise. Mr. Walker had suggested that one or the other paper buy the other some time back but Charles had declined considering such a thing. And so now that Charles had come into money and a new viewpoint, he thinks the purchase of the Enterprise by the Times would be a good idea. Mr. Walker, in the mean time, has changed his mind, too, and is inclined to retain the Enterprise regardless. So the tide of newspaper publishing ebbs and flows in that quarter and Hatchitoches will be the better served, I think, if the Walkers retain ownership of the Enterprise.

Celeste viewed the fireworks in town from the I. S. Willard home where she said there was a darling group of people. I. S. Willard

08801

10872

Monday, December 5th, 1960.

Memorandum; retrospective, but I, most benevolent, must not let it be a burden to be remembered as of help to the Drissley all day and in the mid '70's. It was such an unexpected pleasure to discover a Friday message from Lyle in today's post. I am so glad to hear that the theatre turned out to be so interesting and in view of the play to be presented and those presenting it, it should have been a together delightful. A little breather making this possible made me so happy all around. The vignette presented, too, of the activities of the several family groups on Thanksgiving Day made it quite clear how these must have been a little element of the unfortunate about it. Somehow it all reminded me of what the artist once said to Ora when remarking upon the amount of gray she had used in a picture: "Gray is for sad."

I shall hold the thought that a touch of old rose may somehow be introduced into the setting and old rose somehow radiates the sad of the gray, and may this be just in the offing. I am so glad you mentioned the introduction of the 16 and two thirds business in the reading machines. I shall write to Ron Rouge tonight, asking that my name be put on the list.

There is something magical about the way the spirit of Christmas unfolds suddenly along a bout this time of year. I am sure the spirit you mentioned will be altogether glorious and I hope in taking a look for yourself, you will include a second one for me, too. ....



10873

10873

In response to your inquiry about the persimmons, I regret to say that while they were quite bountiful this year, the heavy rains, I guess it was, seemed to transform them from green to orange and a state of over-ripeness that made shipping of any too hazardous for practicality. I'm so glad you mentioned the quinces of the smaller variety which they used to employ in making jelly for, until you mentioned them, I had forgotten about that type. I was doubly glad to be reminded of them because it, in turn, reminded me of a tree of fruit such as you describe, that graced a hidden garden at my aunt's house in the country, a garden I liked better than all the rest because it was so cozy and serene. I suppose it was not more than 30 feet square, two sides protected by a high stone wall, the other two sides by the right angles of the house, given over to a little private library on one side and an enclosed gallery on the other, -- two features of the house that most people never knew existed, so that the little garden with its quince tree was almost as secluded as a garden could be, -- and I loved it and the old tree, under which I loved to while away long afternoons, reading without interruption save from the occasional visit of a butterfly, a cricket or a bird, all three of whom seemed to like the place as much as I. If I can find a modest, little box, I am bound to send along one or two of the smaller quinces so that you may have the pleasure of just sniffing the marvelous perfume which may waft you momentarily, too, back to other times and climes, as you share with me the delight of the fusion as of then and now.

And speaking of sending a little box, reminds me of something that happened Saturday. I was at the post office when J. H. came along. He asked me, to my surprise, for I thought there was a vast shortage, if I didn't want to send some pecanias to somebody. I said I should like to. He turned to the clerk and remarked that I would be handing the clerk a list of addressees and to send five pound sacks to everybody but added that he knew little Miss Lee would be on the list and be sure to send her ten pounds on my account which I thought would tickle little Miss Lee as it did me. I told you that I had more to chatter about but I guess I had better confine myself to this page and give you a chance to get on with the hundred and one demands on your time these busy, busy days. It was all so nice, today's unexpected message from Lymé.....

10874

10874

Tuesday, December 6th, 1960

Memorandum: I sat down on a bench on the west side of Ghana about 4:30 this afternoon. The light was such a lovely blur it automatically took me back to the fine collection of examples, at least, of Turner sunsets in both the Metropolitan and National Gallery, -- the London one, and I was enchanted with the quarter hour of relaxation and reverie. The Ghana garden offers the best view of the sky of all the gardens in and I'm very fond of going there frequently just to absorb a pretentious sky scene whenever the build-up looks promising, -- and it never disappoints. I enclose two or three letters you might find interesting. The one from Carrie is particularly typical. Carrie, I cannot resist dropping her a line to tell her how much she sounds like the editorial page of the New York Times when she gets her talking politics and how she is doing.

I am wondering if she uses that phrase about not counting letters to everyone. I suppose I have probably written her fine on six lines since last she took quill in hand to address a few words to me. Under the best of circumstances, I should think she would do better to skip reference to letter counting, as I have not had time to do so. The letter from Mrs. Hardin is so much like his spoken word. There is something about his situation that reminds me of Mary Pringle. You may recall that in her case, Dr. Rand once asked me if I would see her and suggest that she should go to the hospital. I found it difficult to do so.



10875

17801

something that would get her out of doors and doing things with her hands. As a courtesy to him, I agreed to see her. She had a camera with her and told me she had just had a dark room set up in her home. I suggested she always keep her camera handy when traveling. She said she might snap a shot whenever, at what were bound to be rare intervals, she might stumble onto just the right scene, just the right light, etc. She took me at my word, and a day or so later appeared at my door, announcing she had taken four hundred pictures the day before and they were already for publication in a book that we could call "Cane River". It is so difficult to tell a person in such a state that their work is of any good and not up to publication standards.

And so it is with Mr. Hardin. He has dug up a tremendous amount of data, together with maps, illustrations, etc., some of them very rare. But he cannot write and I find it difficult to tell him so. He said he was in contact with a house in New York called the Comet Press or some such and that they would publish his work but not the illustrations, maps, etc. You know and I know that this is some flim-flam concern that is going to take him for a ride but he has vast faith in the whole set-up and will see the light only after it is too late. But regardless of that, I told him that if he ever changed his mind about a publisher, it might be possible that I could find someone who would advance the several thousand dollars required for the venture but I did not mention Mr. Hodges, of course.

Mr. Hardin said he likes to do research so much but doesn't like to write. The poor thing doesn't realize, of course, that he can't write in the first place and in the second place it is always the research that is the fun and the writing that is the trick.

I talked with a New Orleans lady visiting Hattiesburg this weekend. She has a couple of school children who attend school in the Crescent City but not the ones at present in the limelight. I was very much interested to hear her say that she thought perhaps the primary reason for all the scuffling going on at the moment stems from the fact that the two schools into which the little colored girls were introduced happen to be schools that are so situated as to have the great preponderance of white trash as pupils. She said she felt if the experiment had been made wherein more cultivated people were concerned, the whole effort would have gone right along without much if any hitch. I found this observation quite arresting.....

17801

10876

Wednesday, December 7th, 1960.

Memorandum: I have been thinking about the weather in Texas. It is so cold here now, and I hope it gets rid of all its ice before it starts to move down this way, or better still, it never gets moving again at all. My first Christmas card of the season came to hand by today's post. It was from some gent named Winterbottom, a Texas resident although I have forgotten the town where Herr Winterbottom resides. Vaguely, it seems to me, I remember having had some sort of correspondence with the aforesaid Winterbottom but what it was all about I cannot remember. I wish this were the only holiday greeting I would receive from a person whose identity I cannot place.

About 4 o'clock, the lady doctor appeared at my door, bearing Desiree in her arms because the baby wanted to play with Desiree and the ground was too damp to permit the dog to knock down the little one. Both the dog and child are crazy about each other but they play too strenuously when the weather is such that a frolic would make a mud pie out of either or both.

The lady doctor said that J. H.'s heart was in such a condition that he might drop dead any time. She said she felt nobody could slow him down but wish somebody might. She said Don's mother was in the car, afraid the dog would upset her and so I went and fetched her to Yucca where we had quite a pleasant chat. She, Don's mama, mentioned reading my column and Eleanor said she felt the "Weekend of May 13th" was the best I had done. I was surprised she should have remembered the title of that one or any other, for I must confess that I, myself, could not have given the title of the piece although I remembered the subject readily enough.

We rounded up some gourds for the cats and off they went to town and I to supper.



10877

10877

Wednesday, December 7th, 1950.

we were but three, --J. H., the clerk and I. As always, J. H. finished first, the clerk next while I was only just getting started. I got up, however, and told J. H. that he had to give some hit to the clerk and me as to how we might-effectively grasp his coat tails to slow him down a little. He had quite a little chat and he, as always, brushed his own health aside, saying he would die anyway if he had to slow down. I walked as far as the front gate with them and then returned to finish my supper. About 7 o'clock, however, somebody knocked on my door and it was, of all people, J. H. We chatted about himself for a little while and then leaving, he said he would really try slowing up a little. I think he will have little success in his attempts and I doubt if anyone can show him how effectively but perhaps his regard for others, concerned over his health, may give him pause occasionally.

Tonight's news and news comments seem to be all wrapped up in Pearl Harbor memories of 1941, with much talk, too, about the Government, at long last, releasing pictures of the original bombs that blasted the two Cities, bringing the war to a close. Great satisfaction seemed to be felt all around that the photos of these bombs should have been released but for the life of me, I cannot see why anybody should feel force should be used to get these photographs out of their classified list and reproduced in newsprint. Probably scientists for military people would find them entertaining but I cannot imagine anyone else being too impatient to see their likenesses.

Ann Williams Britton called me this afternoon to chat a little. I was sorry I was busy with helpers at the time so couldn't go into some of the political things I should have liked to. Her husband, Jack, spent last week end in Baton Rouge where he is behind the scenes man in some of the State Administration's doings and I am always glad to give the Governor a push by having Ann go to work of Jack. Along with her, I met her mother, Pat and Juanita B. who live just down the street. He said it's a secret that Juanita B. is in her second month of pregnancy. Interruption... did I say second month of pregnancy, and both parties are

10878

10878

Thursday, December 8th, 1950.

Memorandum: Mrs. Emma Mignon Mignon to Mr. J. H. Mignon  
about 40. It's not  
began sprinkling about an hour before daylight, keeping gently  
but steadily at it all day, surprising me with its total  
of two inches by night, it had all been so thin. It continues  
in the same vein tonight and will not let up before tomorrow  
night, the weather bureau says. In short, it's just like  
December day which, indeed, it is.

At coffee I learned that T. Sal Hertzog Gunn, the late Miss  
Sally's daughter, is in the hospital. Before coffee, Thelma  
had called me to say the same thing and as T. Sal is  
John's secretary and as the times are busy, her absence  
from the President's office is much regretted. Carmen had the  
same thing to relate in the afternoon. T. Sal's daughter,  
Mary Gunn Johnson, was down with her family from Shreveport  
for the light festivities on Saturday. I gather from  
what I heard over the coffee cups that T. Sal got mightily  
lit either during or just after the lights and  
it must have been a good one to put her in the hospital.  
So far as I know, John and Thelma have never known that  
T. Sal hits the bottle with such force, hits at it at all, in  
fact, and yet for years T. Sal has been hitting it. Her  
elder sister, Marie Louise Hertzog, wife of Dr. Holbrook of New Or.  
died an alcoholic some years back. Miss Sally was  
always adamant about never letting liquor be in the  
house at Magnolia. The result was that Marie Louise and T. Sal  
were forever doctoring up their cokes and such like and Miss Sally  
never dreaming that any of her children drank.

I can't remember if I mentioned a day or two ago that  
Emmet has a new Erwin and everything in the base-cour is  
just lovely, the new Erwin looking exactly like  
the former one whose place she takes. Neither of them seem to  
like the drizzle and when I let them out, were inclined  
to frolic on the gallery, with an occasional sortie into  
the puddles beyond which they adored. Along about  
7 o'clock this afternoon, they voluntarily returned to  
the base-cour and so I take it Erwin is quite  
contented with her new home and her new companion. Some people  
think unimaginitive in always having a cat called Grandpa



10879

10879

Thursday, December 9th, 1960.

and a pair of ducks named Emmet and Erwin and, of course, they are quite right, but as the successive cats and ducks don't seem to mind, why am I to worry about their sameness of names. I have been impressed by the leisurely fashion in which Cabinet appointments are being made by Mr. Kennedy, giving the public an opportunity to digest each instead of swallowing them all in a single gulp. Commentators tonight suggest this is done slowly, with frequent rumors being put out in advance, suggesting several names for a particular post, in order the President-elect may be guided by public reaction, -- approving or disapproving, as is the individual case may evoke. There seems to be some fear that the public might object to Mr. Kennedy would appoint his brother, Robert, to the post of Attorney General. Some how it doesn't seem to me that Mr. Kennedy would hesitate about naming anyone he felt would best fill a given place. Personally, I don't care if the whole Cabinet is filled with Kennedys, they give the kind of service the President-elect seems to be expecting of all his appointments and there is no question about it that brother Robert has demonstrated he knows his way around the law courts. As an admirer of both Stevenson and Fulbright, I should welcome either or both in the Cabinet and perhaps they will both be, as a matter of fact, one as Secretary of State, the other as Ambassador to the U.N., as Cabinet status. I must say I hoped the former Illinois Governor might be named Secretary of State but tonight it appears he will be the Ambassador instead.

On the Louisiana front, the Legislature whose cockeyed laws took scads of people off welfare a month or two ago, has created a fine assortment of difficulties for people who understand nothing about what is going on. The case of the widow of the Dark Duke is a case in point. She has had her welfare check for these past several months and she is liable to believe her children number five, the oldest being 12 or 13 years old. The family lacks sufficient shoes and clothing for the children to go to school. I learned about this situation tonight. The welfare office is going to have a busy morning on the morrow. I'll bet Santa makes little titer regardless and the State will be supplying the necessities and the gifts. It will be a great pleasure for me to put a smudge pot under the

18801

10880

Friday, December 9th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, chilly and humid but no drizzles, of dew and damps starting at midnight and lasting for about 24 hours but are promised an improvement by Tuesday. I hold the thought the Weather Bureau timetable may be a little slow and that a pleasant heat wave will catch up with us long before then. It's always nice to encounter a laugh before noon and I got one this morning around 8:30 when Carmen called to express her delight with this week's column, "Letter to Santa". Carmen is as old-fashioned and bigoted as about color as most dullards and obviously didn't get the point of the article at all, just going to prove that once one gets followers of a column, he is likely to have their approval, even if he is saying things quite contrary to what the readers believe. With the Legislature currently whipping up racial disturbances and all the scuffling going on in New Orleans, one member and another of the Louisiana Press Association has opined that Candide Memo seems to get in more licks against bigotry than any other medium of the moment. One of these days I suppose the Citizens Councils will start squawking but in the mean time if people like Carmen read the column and applaud, it somehow suggests either that nobody is reading the thing anyway or that those who do read it always miss the point. But at least, people dwelling beyond the Pelican State sometimes express approval and explain the reason for doing so is because they like some of the stuff being set forth. Some lady living in New York named Lake, -- it seems to me her name might be Alice but I am not sure, and said to be a friend of Mrs. Roosevelt, wrote the editor of the Enterprise a while back asking for particulars about the columnist because, as she explained, she had already fallen in love with him. Imagine Carmen, for one at least, hasn't fallen in love with me. I am not sure I am not a little bit of a



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with the columnist but she likes to get out on the front row and applaud after having read the thing without ever bothering to pause long enough to sense its implications. A hundred years hence when the present tenseness of the present color thing has faded, if anyone should stumble over a file of the Enterprise and glance through some of the columns in the Cane River section, he would or will probably be amazed that they, at publication time, meant anything at all, as viewed in that future glare of noonday, having forgotten the darkness of the 1960's when the faint glimmer of one little candle could exert a faint glow. If only today Louisiana had a Beaumarchais to mock off a contemporary "Mariage de Figueres".

Why the State Library Board should have met in Alexandria instead of Baton Rouge today, I know not. But a meeting there was and J. H., as chairman, attended, with Celeste going along to do some shopping. I am glad J. H. had Clyde Claude Emmett Davis drive. At supper, J. H. said Joel Fletcher, also a board member, had sent me a gallon of ice cream from the Southwestern University agricultural section. It's nice to know Dr. Joel thought of me but I shall never see the stuff since, as in the past, it undoubtedly went into the deep freeze to be drawn on from across the fence for festive occasions. I am not complaining about the failure of the stuff to reach its final destination for I'm making mighty slow progress in my efforts at reducing and something tells me good temptations will be confronting me daily in the weeks just ahead.

I can't recall if I mentioned or did not mention yesterday that Ann Britton called me to say that in the current issue of Forestry Magazine, just out, I believe, there is something said about C. Ramsey currently having a new film in production bearing the title of "The World of Clementine Hunter". I enclose a letter from Pat Baldrige. You will find another letter from her in

10882

Sunday, December 11th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Saturday showery and cold, Sunday sunny and cold. What interests me more about the weather, however, is tonight's news, indicating that Lyme is getting snow and I find myself holding the thought there may not be much of it and that it may be cleared from the streets before tomorrow's dawning.

Saturday's post brought a letter from Kay which speaks for itself. Apparently things are rocking along alright in that quarter but I do wish James were going with her to The Bluff.

The letter from the daughter of the Frank Percy's, mailed from the Post Office nearest St. Mary's in the Woods, was unexpected. It seems so odd that that section of Louisiana would be hearing about the Cane River Memo on Greenwood from as far afield as the Frenchtown, New Jersey Pratts. In responding to this letter, I said that I did not chance to have a copy of the Memo in question which isn't the truth, and that I would communicate with the publisher, --not naming same, of the paper regarding a back number. The truth is that the punch line about the Greenwood reflecting pool being deep enough to float a mule was from the lips of Mrs. Frank Percy, although not named, of course, in the article. Still, I feel instinctively that the daughter might recognize her mother's words in the quotation and I shouldn't like to make anyone wince unnecessarily. I hope the lady forgets the Memo and I shall stall the office in forwarding anything to her while hoping that the Pratts, who had a copy may have lost it.

I can readily imagine how impossible it must be to find time to read anything in the present hurly-burly and if you skip enclosures, you will really have missed nothing of any special interest.



10883

10883

Blythe and Joan came to see me this afternoon. They both seemed to be pretty much on the gay side and both are entranced with the doings in New Orleans and asked me if I didn't feel as thrilled as they were that the school boycott was succeeding. All three of us laughed when I said my garden flourished across the wall from theirs.

And speaking of the New Orleans thing, in the current, December 12th, issue of Time, there is a grand quote from someone or other, -- from the Herald-Tribune, I believe, in the section devoted to quotes from the nation's press, if there is such a section. In any event, the thing is about letting the Confederacy secede, after all these years, and find it a bang-up. Mr. Walker read it last night and over the phone to me last night.

At supper tonight, I learned that T. Sal Hertzog Gunn has left the hospital in town and gone to Alexandria to spend four weeks with her son down there. She seems to have gone on a terrific bat so such force as to hospitalize her, but it is hoped she may get back on her feet and return to her job as first secretary to the President. John wrote her to the effect that we all occasionally need a little rest and he hoped she would be back with the beginning of the new semester which I thought quite noble of him.

A note from Miss Kate Perkins states that she was going to the hospital for a hernia operation. Because of the age and condition of her brother and sister, she had to have them put in the hospital, too, while she was there. She remarked that it would be fifty six year next January 21st that she first undertook to, ching J. H. Going to the hospital is bad enough for anybody but it seems to me having to drag a sister and brother with one to see they get some sort of care must beat about anything I have heard of in that category.

And now I'm going to knock off some mail and then try to catch E. R. Murrow on background, holding the thought the while that it has already stopped snowing in Lyme.....

10884

10884

Monday, December 12th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and cold all day. Clear and colder tonight with the promise of a freeze. I was sorry my hopes of yesterday regarding only a moderate amount of snow in the Lyme area, and all the wishes came to naught in the tons of stuff that fell all over the place and so endlessly. It goes without saying I shall be so glad when I learn how little Miss Lee fared in the wake of the storm. Saturday's post began manifesting signs of increased activity in the postal section and today's amount was augmented. Although quite a lot of feed stuffs have already come to hand, I have been successful in getting it distributed fairly well. The majority of plantation friends don't seem to care for fruit cake but the few exceptions are altogether crazy about it, which is a help. I have had only three fruit cakes thus far and have had no difficulty at all in finding recipients for them. By dint of some doings on the phone with town, I have also been lucky enough to get some things going in the direction of the Dark Duke's widow and children and that seems to make things more in tune with the spirit of the season.

O'Brien sent me a fruit cake as big as a typewriter and I was mighty glad to pass that along to others who could do something with it for I, myself, never so much as tasted a crumb. Jean makes her own fruit cakes, even as does Blythe and Blythe, Miss Mah and such like really do turn out something quite special, the best part of their creations being that they don't taste like fruit cake. And speaking of Blythe reminds me that yesterday she mentioned Mary Pringle for the first time in a year which is quite soon enough to satisfy me. She said that



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Mary had come up from Leconte the other day and dropped in to see her. Blythe happened to have some friends in when Mary arrived and Mary began telling them about her success with trying to raise a gourd this year for the first time in her life. She said the seed was quite rare and had produced a fine gourd, the like of which she and nobody else, she reckoned, had ever seen. She said it had a long, narrow handle and at the base was about the size of an orange and had big old bumps all over it. Blythe said Mary made quite a to-do about her gourd and she let her rattle along until she said that she was thinking of opening it after it had dried and that she thought she might send me a seed to see what I could do with it. Blythe then invited her attention to a basket of gourds just behind her, spilling over with the type of gourd she had described and thereupon everybody whooped or whooped and hollered. Blythe finally broke down and confessed that all of them had come from up this way.

At supper tonight, J. H. mentioned that a picture appeared in some newspaper or magazine this past week end, showing Cousin Emmet, marching in a New Orleans parade, bearing a Confederate flag. I must see if I can't find this and pass it along. Probably it was in the Shreveport Times.

I. S. Willard just called, having returned from South Louisiana half an hour ago. She saw the Registers and found them happy as clams. She saw her cousin, June and husband, David Nixon, in New Orleans. She said they had poured thousands into some sort of a gallery, --I suppose for puppet and cat performances, of which Carolyn is supposed to employ in a documentary. I didn't know it before but it seems June broke her arm a few months back and then a week or two ago broke the other. The Nixons were depressed, naturally enough. I. S. W. said she just missed Carolyn which also seems natural enough.

And so the day runs its course and I'm still thinking about little Miss Lee and the weather at Lyme.....

108801

10886

Tuesday, December 13th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and chilly but nothing to suggest what is being visited on Lyme by way of mountains of snow and frigidities. I hold the thought that some advantage may have come out of it all for little Miss Lee such as an excuse to "stay put" or some such.

It was too clammy in this area to permit much out of door endeavors but I did have a few little things to do in the hana neighborhood and I was enchanted at the entertainment provided by a pair of squirrels who have taken a liking to the little old place. It was a wonderful trapeze act they put on for me in sailing through the air from the roof of the building to the limbs of the pecan tree just behind, --forward and back, and I don't recall such a frolic in a long time. Squirrels have always liked the Yucca neighborhood and this year they seem to be distributing their population a little wider, some having established themselves in the bindery and some in Dr. Miller's, while the pair at hana seem to have just about rounded out the population distribution. I have admonished all the servants never to mention squirrels to the gun-happy Winks and I hold the thought our little furred friends may escape a Christmas holiday slaughter.

Somehow I get the impression I am making quite a Denholme margin on this note. I had been knocking off some return addresses on some envelopes and must have left the carriage at that adjustment.

Bill Larson's mother called me today. She said that Bill and wife, Julie, are flying down from Manhattan for a week at Christmas time. Bill continues in some play in New York but I forget its name. He is also doing some TV stuff, too, it seems. Anyway, Bill's mother had written him, saying it was time



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10887

to renew his subscription of a "atchitoches paper and asking him if he preferred the Times or the Enterprise. He said he wanted the Enterprise unless the Cane River Memo should be moved from the Enterprise to the Times. He asked his mama to arrange a supper one night during the week that would be at a time convenient for me to come in and join them. I suggested instead that Bill and June come out here some afternoon. I am certain don't intend going to town for any other purpose than seeing the lights and haven't the vaguest notion of spending an entire evening in any one's house. It is Bill's step-father, by the way, who is building the new residence on Cane River for the editor of the Times and his bride.

There was another burst of stupidity in the Legislature today when some member gained possession of a letter, written by an English professor at L.S. U., observing the outrageous doings by the Government over the racial thing. A member from some North Louisiana Parish immediately introduced a bill, withholding the twenty five million dollar operating expenses from the University until that institution had divested itself of any member of its staff. It all sounds so much like the doings of a bunch of Nazis, with heavy emphasis on the autocratic and ignorant side.

I was glad to learn from the radio tonight that a whole flock of New Orleans business executives have taken space for an advertisement in tomorrow's Times Picayune, calling on the Legislature to lay off the Crescent City schools.

Mrs. Walker called me this morning to ask my opinion as to the wisdom of publishing an editorial on the Legislature. It is exceedingly well done and I'm hoping she will run it in next week's issue although I suggested she consult her husband on the matter before doing so since he may know of ways the Legislature might visit its wrath on the paper if it dares question any of its doings.

Celeste spent the day at the Country Club which meant J. H. dined with us and I always like that. Everybody seems so busy, including the squirrels. I'm the only one who seems to have time.

38801

10888

Wednesday, December 14th, 1950.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, sort of upper 30's, and sprinkley all day. As I look back over the past couple of decades, every Christmas time has its own story. Sometimes they are late in breaking. This year they were early. I had had a busy morning, what with quite a few letters to get off from dictation for my friends who neither read nor write. The store sent me a couple of dull would-be pil rims and added to that waste of time were several odds and ends requiring attention. And then, just after dinner, I responded to a tapping at my door and, although I didn't sense at first glance this was it, --the 1950 Christmas story. The Lord knows it was simple enough and perhaps that's why it almost moved me to strange tears. There on the gallery stood a row of colored gentlemen, five in number, some quite "ageable" one or two merely boys. They asked if they might see me in private, --probably having heard the radio news and confusing it with a visitor's voice. I asked them in and although I offered them chairs, they declined, explaining they all were in a "slow hurry".

There was a moment or two of hesitation and then one of them asked me if I would count their pecane money for the. I would. Each withdrew his hand from a coat pocket and placed his money on the little round tip-top table here beside my desk. It totalled \$15.50.

Nobody had said anything and all seemed grave. As I had counted it, feeling of the coins to determine the denomination each coin, keeping each deposit in its own separate place. Again I announced the total, --\$15.50.

The gravity continued and nobody said anything until, by agreement and knowing glances, the one to the other, the one who obviously was the spokesman for the group explained.

He said that while only one of them could read much, they always depended on each other to find out what I had to say in the paper and although they didn't always understand it they agreed, following last week's Cane River Memo that



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what I wanted for Christmas was a book and a pair of glasses. The didn't know where to get either thing but they had agreed to put their pecane money together and bring it to me to see if it would be enough to buy my glasses for me. The statement having been made, all was uite and five pairs of eyes, I could feel instinctively, were anxiously riveted on me. I never struggled so mightily to hold back the tears. By the grace of God, however, I was able to dominate my emotion and, thinking fast, I spun out a lie to the effect that I thought I only lacked five dollars to my for the glasses that were already coming but that I wasn't sure about that exactly. And so I extracted a dollar from each neat little pile which I pocketed and each contributed took back what was left from his own contribution, each promising as he did so to come back next Saturday to see how I made out. Next Saturday, of course, everybody will get a Christmas gift and my guess is that among other things, each of the delegation will get a nice shiney new silver dollar. The weather, being the "misere" that it was, we all decided as soon a our business was transacted, that a little gl of wine would be good to make merry the heart on such a day, and we all had a taste together and off went the delegation, -- physically, at least, but you can judge for yourself if they lingered on in my heart. It is pleasant to report that up until tonight, at least, the blackbirds haven't put in an appearance in the gardens and I'm beginning to hold the thought they may leave the place to the cardinals, white throated sparrows, mocking birds and such like, finding other and more hospitable places for their own unnumbered hordes to pass the winter. And now to some mail and thence to the news to see what today's batch of tomfoolery has issued from the legislature.

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Thursday, December 15th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and sorta 30 to 40-ish. I'm wondering about Lyme.

Today the postman was late, even as he usually is at this season of the year when more stops are required on his route with the approach of Christmas. What was surprising, however, was the fact that although he had waited for the arrival of mass deliveries from trucks and trailers both common carriers must have been slowed up considerably with the result that in this area, the mails were unusually light. I reckon we can count on a double dip of cards and whatnot, come tomorrow.

The Shreveport society page today carried a notice of interest, the marriage of A. J. Hodges to some lady in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, of all places. We shall be having more about that before long, I suppose.

J. H. and a couple of other men left around 7 this morning for New Orleans. There was a Board meeting of the Market Commission of which J. H. is a member, possibly chairman. I think some sort of an elaborate development by the State has been in progress for such a center for some time, possibly years. Celeste told the clerk she thought she would spend the night at Melrose, "since I might as well begin getting used to being alone", but I was careful not to see if she really carried through her intentions.

With so many things going on in the world, I was impressed by how little space the radio news men give, if any, to marriage of King Baudoin of Belgium. Of the three I heard tonight, only Lowell Thomas mentioned it. I know so little about Belgium, I don't find it easy to wonder if there's any similarity between it and the Netherlands in the mystery of what was done with the fabulous riches that were always said to have come out of the Dutch East Indies and the Belgian Congo. It has been so long since I have been to school that I suppose



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lots of things have changed with the years. If I remember correctly, the Congo for decades, perhaps for generations, was the private property of the King of Belgium and, as an investment, was supposed to have paid quite generous profits on the venture. The same generous profits were supposed to have flowed out of the fabulously rich Indies, too, but where the golden stream debouched, I never heard anyone say. In the case of Belgium, at least, perhaps the King was always in the class of wealthy physicians who explain they must be rich to give so much charity of which the public is ignorant. The really charitable physicians I have changed to know, such as Dr. Miller, Dr. Worsley and Dr. Rand, were never wealthy and did not base their charity on the proposition that they had a right to charge people outrageously in order to dispense, in Robin Hood fashion, some of the largesse of their ill-gotten gains.

I haven't turned through today's Enterprise but I am told it carries, somewhere in its pages, an account of a wedding, along with the conventional picture of the bride or bridal party. I know not which. Mr. Walker called me this evening to say that no sooner had the paper hit the street than he had a call from a man named Webb, who heads the Alumni section at Northwestern who referred to the notice, asking if it was the policy of the paper to report on such matters when having to do with color, for, if so, he wanted to cancel his subscription immediately. Verily, people are so wonderful. I find myself wondering if the aforesaid Webb read today's Cane River Memo about Prince Esterbrook and Associates and got the implied slap in the last few words in the piece. For all I know, hill billies don't sense slaps of the more subtle variety. As one reader of my column pointed out to me in a phone conversation a couple of weeks back, it is simply have to go back and re-read the article, realizing there was a message in it, for which I failed to grasp on the first quick running through.

Well, Lord, I notice it is sprinkling again and autumn seems inclined to give way to winter.....

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Friday, December 16th, 1960.

Memorandum: Clear and cold. It was such a wonderful day via the Post Office. A nice fat Christmas letter from Lyme, an equally nice fat Christmas box, so wonderfully well wrapped that it traveled just perfectly, and I'm as happy as a clam about the whole business.

Slap off the hat, may I say that the lovely soft seater fits me to a T, the size perfect, the texture perfect, the style perfect, the color perfect, with the whole thing so beautifully enclosed in such luscious decorative doings that I shall always think of it when I hear the words, "the perfect gift".

Throughout the next two weeks, the gay Christmas tree will be just grand for uses little boy during the day and at night it will, as it is right now, grace a table along side the fireplace in the living room where it stands between two Christmas candles from other Christmases, still quite intact, thanks to their generous bulk, and from my desk I can see the candles glowing and the glinting of the little tree. And when I wander into the adjoining room, dominated by the setting, I can revel in the charm of the ingredients of the arrangement and feel my heart glow in unison with the setting which, as a matter of course, breathes softly the spirit of the donor.

Thanks to little Miss Lee, this is such a nice warm, cozy holiday season, regardless of the crispness of the air outside.

I have the two packages for across the fence and the hospital at 9, on the tray where rests tomorrow's out-going things and I shall deliver the aforesaid packages when, on the morrow at 9, I shall be passing that way for coffee.

Today's mail was fairly heavy and interruptions were such that I had an opportunity to get almost nowhere but naturally I concentrated on the Lyme letter and was



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especially nechaned with so many things coming to my attention. It is so very thoughtful and kind of little Miss Lee to share her impressions of the theatre and her accounts provide me with such wonderful glimpses of what is going on behind the footlights. I found it sad that circumstances prevented the companionship proffered but, of course, one understands. I wanted to express my thanks, too, for the thoughtfulness in giving an account, as covered in the postscript, as to local weather and indicating that in spite of all, the effort to get to business was successful. I hope it was equally so getting back to home base. I was especially touched by the reference to things electrical, representing boundty overflowing but as I appear to be adequately equipped for distilling beverages and all, I am bound to confess my needs are more than amply supplied.

Sister and Lloyd were in town this morning, telephoning to say they would be here for dinner. We dine at 11:30, they arrived at 2, and I was honored by a visit of perhaps two hours and was enormously impressed by what seemed to me a considerable deterioration in the lady's emotional and psychiatric state. About 4, when a secretary arrived, I opened the letter from Lyme, being otherwise alone and had just completed it when, hoping to go on to the enclosures, Lloyd returned, saying he wanted to see the guinea pigs about which I knew nothing and obviously he thought me quite dumb. I learned later he had heard J. H. months ago speak of guinea hens and Lloyd had converted them into pigs which, of course, is something else again. Then there were other interruptions and so I shall have to set the balance of the mail aside. I reasoned, until this weekend. "Patience on a tombstone....."

Celeste is barking with a cold but she said she and J. H. were attending an R. E. A. Christmas party tonight, --the Wenks having departed at 5, and J. H. having returned from New Orleans half an hour later, and I'm glad he missed them but why either he or Celeste would be dreaming of attending a party under existing physical conditions, I cannot imagine. I should add that Juanita B. phoned to say the rumors as to her pregnancy were greatly exaggerated and that was that.

I am just back, --between this and the foregoing paragraph, from a stroll into the living room where I sat for a while, drinking in the feeling of companionship, radiating from the candlelight and the gay little Christmas tree. How wonderfully worth while is life if there be another kindred soul.....

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Sunday, December 18th, 1950.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold yesterday with ice on the pot this morning. Clear and warmer today and there will be no ice on the pot in the morning. I am so thankful for this peaceful weekend. There is no great pleasure in contemplating next week's hubbub. I'm sure the Shreveport contingent to the number of three or four will be upon us, --mother and offspring but the fact that Joe and Juanita A. will be here from Sunday night for about a week so that the sheer weight of numbers will at least be helpful in keeping down the racket. Blythe and Joan came Saturday afternoon and we had quite a pleasant chat about trifles. They bore gifts of pudding, wine and a magnificent Christmas wreath the materials for the latter having been collected and fashioned by Blythe during the week. I suppose the wreath itself is about 2 or two and a half feet in diameter. With a heavy wire as a base, Spanish moss was affixed over which was imposed a fine greenery, vaguely like cedar but of finer type. The necks of gourds were so sawed off as to resemble bells and these sprinkled with silver, the humok of them suspended from the top of the wreath. The inevitable big red ribbon was then attached and it looked just grand. I then tapped a nail into the frame of the screendoor giving from the front gallery into the living room and the effect is very pretty from the front of the house and equally but different attractive from inside looking out, thanks to the design of the window panes through which one views it when seated on the sofa. I was expecting a busy afternoon, what with Norman Fletcher having asked if he might come down but he must have got lost in the holiday merriments somewhere along the route for I never did see him. I was pretty much alone today, too, what with only Carmen and her sister, la Durant, having passed this



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way this afternoon. They both are more tiresome together than when apart or, perhaps my patience grows shorter with the years, or, possibly, those same years are having some effect on them. They seem to have gone quite far in developing a habit that for a long time has set its seal on the sisters Haupt, --Bertha and hope, in that one sister is forever assisting the other in completing a phrase, tossing in the word the other is searching for or, if not searching for it, hasn't had time to speak, and appropriating details for enlarging purposes that have no place in the conversation, such as, "this morning, --I think it was a round 11 o'clock," --interruption, "No, it couldn't have been 11, not more than 10 minutes of 11", well, I remember looking at my watch and it pointed to..." but you know your watch never keeps good time...." etc., etc., and I wish the Brazeale and Haupt duos would call on each other in town and leave the country to me.

Something odd happened to the Ed Murrow program tonight over WWL, New Orleans. I'm not sure, but it seems to me the subject of China was being handled by E. Roscoe when right in the middle of a sentence there was a clonk and a tiresome preacher, in the middle of a sentence, began talking about Christmas. There was no fading or no imposing of any adjoining station but simply a complete imposition of the preacher on the wave length and no more of the Murrow business for the balance of the program, --about half way through, and I don't understand any of it.

From town this evening, Celeste brought me a home made cake and a bottle of wine, both sent me by Madam Millsbaugh with a lovely card, and J. H. brought me some oranges of excellent quality. In the case of the lady, it was almost pitiful to witness the childishness in the matter of the cake for she simply had to have a slab of it although her house is running over with such like. I had promised the first cake coming to hand to Clemence but that doesn't matter. I'll get another alright, and Marie Antoinette will have hers and min

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Monday, December 19th, 1950.

Memorandum: Fair and mild, as though Indian Summer, mindful that winter is scheduled to blow in 48 hours hence, had bounced back to give us one last reminder of the mellowness of what a Louisiana autumn may be like when it wants to be nice. Tomorrow we are promised more blue sky and thermometer readings in the 70's.

I was pleased tonight but not greatly surprised when I learned from the news that John F. Kennedy, sr., has indeed been elected President of the United States.

Over the coffee cups this morning, mine hostess confided to me that Sister had called yesterday and that J. H. had suggested to her that she and the children come down after dinner on Christmas day. As Joe and Juanita A. and Pat and Juanita B. have been hiddenite sup here, it is somehow expected the Shreveport contingent will leave before supper time. My guess is that they will not.

The plan is that J. H., Celeste and I will dine a little after 11, enabling Celeste to go to the hospital to see with Madam Regard whose nurse will be having the day off, and that will mean J. H. and I will have quite a lot of entertaining to do with the Yanks. The J. H. Henrys, juniors and seniors, aren't expected until first dark. In short, we shall see what we shall see by way of a hoped for but not expected visit, come Sunday.

Ann Williams Britton called me today to say that Jack had received a somewhat surprising statement from Bastrop, Louisiana, where, some weeks back, he had addressed the Chamber of Commerce in that city, passing along to them my suggestion that if they wanted to excite interest in their community permanently, they might well erect a statue to Aaron Burr who had invested heavily in lands there. What was surprising about the communication is that until the Burr matter was presented to them, nobody



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had ever known of Burr's holdings there.

She said her brother, Richard, --R. B. Williams, junior, was home from Tulane for his freshman Christmas holidays. Then she told me something I had never heard of, that Tulane students number about 54 percent Jews, in consequence of which Richard is being kidded by his local associates. According to Ann, many universities in various sections of the country try to hold down the number of Jewish students to some sort of a percentage and that those who don't get into other universities matriculate in Tulane.

Carmen brought me some frozen cherry turn-overs, I believe the things are called. They are in dough form and are said to be quite fine if properly baked. Carmen went to great trouble to give me explicit instructions, to pass on to the cook, --an over at 485 to start with, and then almost immediately cut down to an even 400 and so on. I listened with attention and tonight placed, as you have already suspected, them in the Dutch oven, --at least a couple of them, triangular in shape, and have just observed the results which appear to be good enough. I shall sample one of them later tonight, along with a glass of milk and I have a feeling they are going to taste almost as delicious as though done by someone who knows something about the proper way to bake them.

I am as puzzled by the news of the fire on the Constellation in Brooklyn today as I was by the fire that was so spectacular that raged in the Riverside Church when it was being built. Somehow one doesn't expect modern buildings of stone and aircraft carriers of steel to be subject to such spectacular blazes. Of course 12th century Cathedrals were always burning but that was primarily because of the large amount of wood used, especially in the roofing and the use of torches for lighting, but somehow one doesn't expect such hazards in the 20th century. The Brooklyn-Staten Island and the Munich air disasters or somehow dampen pre-Christmas feelings. Strange, it seems to me, how the death of over a hundred people, killed instantly, we hope, in these accidents, didn't move me half so much as the belated death of the lone little boy who lived for a day, only to die. Mass numbers seem to transform people into ants while the solitary individual remains of intact, solid appeal.....

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Tuesday  
Wednesday, December 20th, 1950.

Memorandum: It rained about 2 last night and this morning, the sun peeping through heavy clouds, looked and felt like spring. A soft jacket was too heavy until about 1:30 when spanking winds out of the North began dropping the thermometer readings and tonight they will dip into the 20's. It will no go about 34 tomorrow, it is said, and thus winter arrived 24 hours ahead of schedule, what with its appearance proclaimed as for 2:27 tomorrow afternoon. From somewhat fuzzy references to weather in the Lyme area, I shudder to think you all may be in for some more cold and snow. I have no objection to Bing Crosby "dreaming of a white Christmas" but I feel no need for one.

It was such an unexpected plaisir to discover a note and a package, the first for me, the second for the artist, in today's post. I know the artist will be enchanted with the lovely card and whatever the package in gay, colorful paper may contain by way of a gift. I'm glad you found the quince carried an aroma, identical with that you remember from yesteryear. I keep a basket of them in the living room and another in the boudoir to produce an atmospheric condition that entrances me in the memory section. If you haven't already finished the figs, may I suggest you try a dab of cream on them, or, if you prefer, try mixing them with some softened ice cream of neutral flavor which will, I feel certain, tickle your palate. They are local fruit and, unlike most preserves in this field, carry very little sweetening which somehow tends to retain the distinctiveness of the flavor, it seems to me. Reverting to the quince, perhaps it is my imagination, but it seems to me the fragrance is a little more potent if one sniffs at it at the end rather than along the side.



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In today's mail came a card from Roan and, on reading it, I found myself wondering if sometime last spring James might have passed along the news this card contained and that a trifling secretary could have skipped a sentence. The sentence in today's card, following the eternal question as to why I don't get over to Natchez, was the casual remark: "Did I tell you that brother, Jim, died last March?"

This is the first time I had ever heard of Jim Flemming's death and I accepted the news as the best I had received from Natchez in years, for I have always worried a little that Jim, manifestly insane, might attempt to murder Roan, even as he tried to murder me, and there was always the fear that he might have better luck with his sister. Be that as it may, it is grand to know that insane Jim has gone to his last rest and I shall worry no more on that score about Roan.

With the post today bringing me greetings from the Tom Jewells, --Tom being the Legislature's floor leader, and I, in return, having sent them an original primitive by none other than Miss Hunter. I attached a note, hazarding the guess that one or the other parties in this exchange of greetings must be wacky and that I should prefer to think it was he discovered on the legislative side. Smile. After all, in these chaotic times, I think it very nice to find a laugh every once in a while and I got quite a loud one today when I learned on the radio that an American correspondent who happened to be a negro, was denied admittance to a press conference at the Ethiopian Embassy in Washington because he chanced to be a negro and now I must get busy and do some work. I'm so glad I'm not a peacock tonight, swaying madly on the upper stretches of a giant pecan limb in a breeze that is obviously buffeting and probably will be numbing before dawn. I hope any potential peacocks in the Lyme area may find themselves a cozy and warm tonight.

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Wednesday, December 21st, 1950.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold. Nothing staves off passers-by but cold weather usually means less interruptions and so I was glad to undertake a flock of things, in comparative assurance I would be seeing nobody.

I had three men cutting and hauling out frozen banana plants which certainly gave Yucca a denuded, untropical appearance and the same chore will be in operation for another three days before we get those concentrations at Yucca, the African House and Thana out of the way.

I had a helper to hand ends in domestic cleaning but there were phone interruptions and the barber came to shear my locks and that out into operations considerably so far as my own participations were concerned.

Today, being the shortest in the year, --I believe in this neighborhood the sun rose at 7:15 and set at 5:12, it was sundown before I knew it and I scooted to the big house at the first tap of the supper bell, about 5:15. But no sooner had I arrived, --and I was the first to do so, that a slave appeared, saying that the boss was on the Yucca gallery with a little low man and his little low and they were asking for me. I accordingly returned and J. H., polite as a dancing master, said he reckoned I recognized Mr. Hodges, and Mr. Hodges said he wanted his wife and me to know each other whereupon I grasped Mr. Hodges' hand and said I hoped it wasn't too late for one to kiss the bride and, without anyone getting a chance to answer that question, smacked her good and, I must say, she didn't seem to mind.

They had brought me a prize flower or potted plant, from the Gardens and J. H. withdrew and we three entered Yucca where we chatted for three quarters of an hour. The wife said she felt she knew me since A. J. has kept all the



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Cane"ive Memos in a special scrapbook which she has been reading, indicating, for one thing, she is a glutton for punishment. But she was very nice and A. J. was very cordial and wanted me to promise to spend a few days with them in January and promised both of them would make a round in March to see the Chinese magnolias. The wife wanted to return to see the other buildings, too, and as J. H. had asked me before them if it wouldn't be nice if they would come over to dinner, I suppose we shall be honored, come March, unless there are too many Henrys about, in which case I shall see to it the Hodges will not dine here.

The peacocks were just taking to the air, according to the Hod when they arrived at Yucca with J. H., and when the Hodges and I left Yucca, they declared they could see the big black spots of the birds on the tenuous pecan limbs against the pale blue sky and the new moon beyond. I was glad Dot and Dash were so thoughtful to arrange the heavenly silhouette in such a timely fashion.

As soon as the Hodges were gone, I took the potted plant across the fence, thinking the folks there would enjoy it more than anything I could think of, --they seemed to get so much pleasure out of the Hodges' azellia last Christmas time. Beside the wide had cast eyes of yearning at the big old green gourd looking like a swan, --its neck so beautifully curved back over the body part which I had contrived into an arrangement in the living room and I did not want anything but gourds and quinoes, festooned with magnolia leaves there this year, and by giving the Hodges the bird, I could rig up something even prettier for the days ahead. I found Celeste in quite a tizzy, being interrupted as she was by my arrival, for, as she fretted, she and J. H. were just getting ready to go to a party in town. It didn't take me thirty seconds to drop the poinsetta and scam in spite of J. H.'s inclination to expatiate on the beauty of the plant.

I was so glad to get back home in time to hear the evening news and to learn that the Federal Courts had knocked out some more Legislature tomfoolery and that the Governor's effort to get a sales tax increased had been defeated.

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Thursday, December 22nd, 1950.

Clear and cold with ice on the pot and just perfect temperatures for the gift from Santa.

Thelma called this morning to ask if she might come down this afternoon. She might. About 2, when I had reached Celeste's cattlegap on my way to the store, a little old Folkswagon came along and in it were Thelma and John. They asked me to observe the fine vehicle they had purchased in Frankfurt a last summer for their jaunt about Europe, and it was obvious from the pride they exuded that they were just as proud of it as Joe Henry is of his. As a matter of of courtesy, I admired the net little contraption, whereupon, --just like Joe Henry, --they insisted I simply must take a ride in it and off we flew down the road as far as Magnolia where, pausing only to turn around, we flew back. The day was pretty and it was pleasant to observe the endless straight rows of the newly ploughed cotton fields while, simulating fascination, I listened to all the finer points to be found in one of these little old automobiles.

I don't know how they succeeded in getting so many parcels into such a limited space and I was accordingly impressed by what they had to withdraw from its inner recesses when we finally descended. I have not opened any of the packages as yet but from their appearance, I gather that among other things there must be a pair of pruning shears, about three feet long, possibly some pruning shears of usual size, something by way of shirts or some such, a couple of cakes, I imagine, some candy and a big old long box that sounds like it might contain a heap more fancy cookies and things. Something tells me Little"iven is going to have some good eating on Christmas Eve.

ohn said that during the holidays, he wanted to come down for a prolonged session of verbally unloading his administrative



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problems, many of which, of course, are complicated by the present high-jinks going on in the Legislature. He said Sall would be back on January 5th and much of his present complicated existence might be simplified, -- "at least T. Sall may be able to find something in a file", etc., etc.

How the Kyers got back to Northwestern, I can't imagine for they were so crazy about some of the larger grounds on the front gallery, they scooped up examples of different types that just about wedged out the inside of their little cars, leaving scant space for them to occupy.

Because of scant doings on the plantation, I got a flock of field hands to assist in cutting down the bananas and the spreading of cotton hulls. The place looks so barren, now that the job has been completed but March will be here before we can turn around and the bananas will again be putting up the usual stage settings of greenery.

At coffee this morning, I learned J. H. had sent out letters, suggesting both sets of S. G. Henrys join with all the other severals and also a year or branches by converging on the old home for Christmas. There is a nobility and it seems to me, a lack of wisdom in trying to effect such gatherings, which, if realized, would bring a delight to nobody and tension and unhappiness to everyone with the possible exception of J. H.. The Weather Bureau is beginning to estimate what the weekend weather is going to be like and it would now seem as though there might be rain for the entire Christmas Eve-Christmas day period, which will be too bad for people who will be venturing out but as I am not planning to go no where, adverse weather conditions will not inconvenience me at all.

Juanita B. and child passed this way this morning to bring me a fine cake and I was delighted she and her child seemed to be in such fine health. Naturally, she was looking for a fine cake, a fine cake of the clan with some thing less than a fine cake, a fine cake, well, perhaps the weather will help a little. And so things turn and may it be pleasant and less "air-ish" in Lyme.....

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Friday, December 23rd, 1950.

Memorandum:

Fair and pleasantly mild with the promise of sprinkling to begin on Christmas Eve and to continue during Christmas Day, a circumstance I r for those who will be road running but a circumstance that may discourage too much tramping around the gardens by Winks or whatever.

The day's in-coming mail took an upward spurt with the result that I am quite thoroughly bogged down with evidences of Christmas greetings. Piles of cards and letters are cluttering up much of the floor and spilling up into available chairs while packages have taken over the corners. Before calling it a day, I shall examine many of the packages, the majority of which, I suspect, contain perishable food, candy and such like. This will give me the double opportunity of getting it into some sort of order and the house to boot while at the same time it will provide me with an opportunity to parcel it out tomorrow evening for those less fortunate than I.

I suppose I shall never equal the record in fruit cakes, set a few years back, when I ran up a total of 18 but I'm doing pretty well on pies this year, -- chocolate and apple, and These will require swifter attention at disposal than was the case with the all time high of fruit cakes.

I can't seem to remember what this morning was like but it must have been fairly busy. Celeste had gone to a funeral in Cloutierville and so I did not see her at coffee time.

Mrs. Walker came down about 2, bringing no end of canned stuff and helped me unscramble some of the packages. Helma and John had brought yesterday and as these included nine and were marked as being from the Kyers, the others from the Hysterical ladies. I wanted to be sure to get them properly sorted before getting them out of the way.

Before Mrs. Walker left, Ora and her Tulane student son arrived bearing pies and records and I was glad to see them and regretted they couldn't linger.

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71100, December 23rd, 1950.

they left, it was dark and supper was over, except for me and I was glad to share most of mine with Grandpa

There were quite a few calls during the day, people in town wanting to make dates for little visitations and I put them all off until the morrow, including Bill and June Larson, Carmen, Mildred and so on.

Three times during the afternoon, the artist called, worried about the possibility of rounding up a cake, announcing a sale at 20 cents per can of beer at the local honkeytonk and so on. Even her grandson called to ask if I had company, which was a subtle way of saying he was hoping to get

a Christmas gift in advance, etc., etc. I must do some serious studying about this matter of the Christmas cake sometime. Everybody I know in the Negro and mulatto sections, simply has to have a cake at Christmas time, and any kind of a cake seems to fill the bill, with no preference for any particular kind although most of them don't seem to think much of fruit cake. The majority of those I know aren't cake eaters, in fact they tend to shy away from pasteries of any kind, and yet, for some reason I have never discovered,

everybody simply has to have a cake in the house at Christmas time. For some reason, a store bought cake seems to be preferable and this may in part be due to the fact that since many of the local ladies who are expert in stirring up preserves, puddings, pies, seldom if ever set their hands to baking a cake and this may be partly due to the fact that they are not in the habit of doing so, they find it difficult to take a swing at it and, possibly, because their only practice is the one attempt made in the year, they find it a mountainous chore to attempt.

Be that as it may, everybody with a household simply has to have a cake and I have several to hand now that are likely to help out. I had to laugh tonight when Doreatha told me that her aunt, just back this evening from the hospital, was quite not because she had only her husband to help her put their cabin in order but simply because she didn't know where she might cast about to find somebody to bake her a cake.

I. S. Willard just called, having arrived tonight from Baton Rouge where she had found the Registers alright, Kay and nurse planning to leave today by plane for Charleston I. S. w. c.

...by plane for Charleston I. S. W. said

10906

Sunday, December 25th, 1950.

Memorandum: In spite of prognostications to the contrary, yesterday turned out to be all blue and gold and so pleasantly warm nobody needed a jacket. Today it was cloudy with an occasional fine mist of such a thin quality that one didn't get any more damp than high humidity would induce.

It seems rather odd to be taking quill in hand at 4:30 but a momentary lull has developed and so I am making the most of it because there is always a chance that dinner or supper or whatever that is scheduled for 5 o'clock may turn into a protracted session and it may be rather late before I return to home base. The Joe Henrys, the Pat Henrys and the Winks are scheduled to appear at 6 and how things will unravel from that hour forward is anybody's guess.

J. H. and I dined alone this morning at 11, what with Celeste having gone to town after church to be with her mama and her mama's guests, -relatives mostly, I suppose, and J. H. thought it would be nice to eat early .....

"Hoo!" Hummmmm..... I was in a daze when I  
heard the phone just rang, Miles Millsapugh calling, to say  
that he and his wife, Tooste, their married daughter from  
south Louisiana, Inez Chaplin and Heaven know what all,  
were studying about heading this way. Well, so be it. I  
warned them of the impending conclave and since that didn't  
frighten them, I shall be enchanted to have  
an excellent excuse to be late for dinner.

298801 Saturday went off pleasantly enough. I had a lot of chores by way of tidying up after the banana plants had been chuked out and didn't bother to take off my long beard until after

1. The first step in the process of identifying a problem is to define the problem. This involves identifying the symptoms of the problem and determining the scope of the problem. Once the problem has been defined, the next step is to identify the causes of the problem. This involves identifying the factors that are contributing to the problem and determining the underlying causes of the problem. Once the causes of the problem have been identified, the next step is to develop a plan to address the problem. This involves identifying the actions that need to be taken to address the problem and determining the resources that are needed to implement the plan. Once a plan has been developed, the next step is to implement the plan. This involves carrying out the actions that have been identified in the plan and monitoring the progress of the implementation. Finally, the last step in the process is to evaluate the results of the implementation. This involves assessing the effectiveness of the actions that have been taken and determining whether the problem has been resolved.



10907

10907

noon dinner, thinking I would have ample time before three o'clock when I was expecting people. But just as I got a nice thick coat of lather on my pangs, somebody knocked. It was the clerk's wife and child. I washed off the lather and we chatted. After they had departed, I thought I would make the most of the scant interim between then and 3, but got only as far as the lathering and Carmen arrived, with Bill and June Larson in her wake. We had a nice chat and Carmen deposited a slice of fruit cake for my Christmas and the Larson's offered a bottle of imported Burgundy, making me wonder why people have to go to all the trouble of tracking down imported Burgundy when Taylor port is so much handier and withal more to my liking.

I supped across the fence and, on returning home, did a few little things before folding up at an early hour.

My Christmas morning callers began arriving fairly early, coming in dribbles of 2 to six in a group and it all worked out very nicely. The nicest thing about Christmas morning at Yucca is the number of negro friends passing this way whom I may not have seen in quite a while, including those who have migrated to Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles and so on who come back to the river for the holiday. As I had had no breakfast, I merely simulated toasts with the parade that last from about 5:30 until 10:45. A few more came back this afternoon, including two of those who had visited me last week with a view to helping me with gifts to secure glasses, in accordance with the wish expressed in the Cane River Memo. Smile. Those returning this afternoon had been surprised to find a "beau" silver dollar in their little gifts on leaving here and so had returned to be sure I wasn't going to run short which I thought quite sweet.

And now I must up and about to see if my wine glasses are properly polished in anticipation of my impending guests.

I was impressed that Saturday's post brought no word from Helen who is usually pretty prompt. The mailing to me from I. S. Willard didn't appear either and naturally, nobody has heard a peep out of the Rocket or the Lost Word. I shall put this in an envelope, leaving it open against tomorrow's

10908

10908

Monday, December 26th, 1950.

Memorandum: Cloudy and sufficiently cool to make my Christmas sweater feel just right.

I believe I left off last night when the Millspaugh and all were about to descend on me. They did, indeed, arrive about five dark, bringing much camera and electrical equipment with them and, after having a glass of port and a round of chat, put the equipment to work on interiors. The house, in view of all the holiday disarray, was a shambles, naturally, but film they would and film they did. They wanted to identify the Yucca interiors with the dweller thereof and that pleased me not at all, looking more like ashmables than the house itself, what with an odd looking, tent-like shirt that had blown across the fence, etc., etc., not to mention a distinctive five o'clock shadow in the whiskers section. But as nothing last forever, the filming eventually came to an end and so did that visit and I moseyed across the fence for a dandy supper, so far as food was concerned, and about the dullest conversation I can recall in any group. Apparently the Joe Henrys, Pat Henrys and the Wenk contingent had but recently arrived, too, and dinner was leisurely in preparation. Conversation following dinner dragged with sufficient dullness to make time seem to stand still. I was glad when I got back to Yucca and my downy couch. I had a good night's sleep but seemed even more tired on arising this morning. I'm still tired.

Breakfast was as strain as it always is when Shreveport is present. In mid morning, Celeste phoned to say Betty Hertzog had just called her to say that Leutitia Bowman of Alexandria had just left Magnolia heading this way to bring me a gift. I can't imagine where she may have got stuck along the way for she didn't arrive until after the dinner bell had sounded. But plantation routine didn't effect the lady and her companion, Miss Henderson, and they sat at Yucca until long after the dinner was over. The cook saved me a plate, setting it aside for



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me whenever I made it.

While they were still here, Mrs. Walker called to say Mr. Walker wanted to speak to me. Mr. Walker said he mother, sister, three of the latter's companions from Arizona and he and his wife and son would like to pass this way. I suggested 2 o'clock. Mrs. Walker called back a minute later to say she would like to bring her mother. I was glad there were no more members of the family in town.

Eventually I swallowed my dinner, dashing off to Ghana to put that place to right, following a visitation by some squirrels who had upset the place considerably. Returning toward Yuoca, I heard voices approaching me from the African House. It was a priest from Bayce, down Alexandria way, with a negro and a mulatto youth, --the latter blind, who wanted a tour. I have had practice in conducting tours for the blind and did what I could to create some mental picture of what we were seeing. As I headed them toward the side gate, the Walker party was drawn up awaiting me. They must have thought it odd when I nodded to them and retaining the arm of the blind youth in mine, walked on passed them without stopping until I reached the priest's car. He wanted to bring another party on Thursday. I said "Uhhhh-uhhhhhhh" meaning but no and suggested sometime later next year. I feel instinctively he will attempt it before the week is out, however.

Sister and daughter spent the afternoon in Alexandria calling on Blythe. They got back in time for supper. Joe and wife spent the day in town but was back for supper. They thought it odd that I declined to join them all across the fence for a prolonged sitting tonight. But I had had too much last night and my afternoon, following the conclusion of the Walker et al visit, had been busy-busy, taking care of endless plantation people who had got lost yesterday morning.

And so here I am at home alone and liking it. It is true there's a stack of stuff to do, --matters left undone yesterday and today but I believe I shall clean up most of the stuff before beard folding. And so Christmas draws to an end, in a manner of speaking, if it weren't that twenty-two people are counted upon to spend the day here tomorrow, --all Henrys, and tomorrow night at this hour I shall be thankful that that has been achieved and, I hope, most of them gone back to their respective home bases.....

11001

10910

Tuesday, December 27th, 1960.

Memorandum:

Thin clouds all morning, growing denser about 2, when the General and Wife, Pat and Wife and Child, Dan and Wife and children, Sister and Daughter, took off for their respective places of residence. Then it began drizzling and has continued into the night. It will get colder before the morrow and Christmas will have completed its course.

Everything seemed to go off fairly smoothly. I was on my way to the store when the General and wife, --the Janiors didn't come, arrived. I was quite taken aback as the car stopped in front of J. H.'s and Madam General jumped out and ran over and embraced me. As she is always of the somewhat stiff, limp hand type, I concluded she must either have had a drink or perhaps forgot her couple decades of rigidity.

There were two tables in the big dining room, one for youngsters, the other for grownups. How the thing was planned, as to seating, wasn't clear to me and I'm not sure how it worked out but I was satisfied with where I found myself. J. H. sat at the head of the table, Leston on his left, Juanita B. next then Celeste, I think and then, perhaps, a couple of Kenks and to Dan at the head or foot of the table and then perhaps Juanita A. or somebody and so back to J. H. I couldn't penetrate the other table made of offsprings. After the blessing, Joe suggested we stand for a moment in silent tribute to his mama and then he made a couple of very kind remarks about J. H., whereupon both seemed to dissolve in tears and everybody began joking and



01201

10911

so dinner began and ran along quite smoothly,  
after which we all got out pictures "struck in  
a family droop", and that was that.

I returned to Yucca and shortly afterward,  
the eneral came over to chat a little and say goodbye as  
it was getting close to 2 when they wanted to depart..  
He said he thought J. H. didn't look well and that  
Dan didn't. He hoped Sister wouldn't come down this  
way for prolonged visits since it obviously  
told heavily on J. H. After everyone had pulled out,  
Joe came over to denounce the Winks generally and  
Sister in particular and I suppose he will be back again on the  
morrow for some more of the same exercise of his  
vocal department.

Carmen called me early this morning to read  
me a letter from her brother, Payne Breazeale, who is  
a Baton Rouge attorney. He said that never  
since the early days of Huey P. Long has there been  
anything to compare with the chicanery going on  
in the Legislature and ended up by saying  
that to fatten their own pockets, the Legislators were  
simply using the color element in the New  
Orleans school and that it was a crime.  
All the racket currently going on is to engineer another  
increase in sales taxes which would boost the New Orleans  
rate to the highest in the nation. The reason given  
for the tax which Governor Davis is trying to engineer is  
to provide money for private schools which has already been  
declared unconstitutional, I believe. The real point,  
however, is to squeeze another 24 million dollars out of  
the tax payers so the politicians can sop up some  
more gravy. Today's radio announced, for example,  
that the wife of a Natchitoches representative, had  
just cashed a State check, revealing that  
this woman, an exceedingly plain housewife, was  
appointed a while back to be "inspector of  
building contracts", as fraudulent a  
piece of nepotism as one could imagine, and so it is  
throughout the whole legislative set up, it is said.

Well, so things turn and so do I relish the sound  
of the rain which we don't need especially but which  
while the dampness continues.....

01201

P. S.

I believe today's out-going mail  
was ahead of schedule, hence a possible delay in  
yesterday's memo

10912

Wednesday, December 28th, 1950.

Memorandum:

An all day drizzle, scheduled to continue  
through tonight, with no temperature variations around  
the upper 40's.

I. S. Willard announced tonight that she  
will be at the Winsow Hotel in New York for about a  
week between January 15 and 22nd. I thought she  
said the Winslow is on the northeast corner of Madison at  
58th Street, suggesting that might be familiar ground.  
She has heard the name of little Miss Lee so often from  
both sides of the local fence that she will not be  
surprised if she should hear from you and she will not  
be surprised if she does not for I immediately lied and  
said I wasn't sure if you were to be in town in mid January, so a  
way things turn will be O. K. As she is the essence  
of discretion, she will make no telephone calls and whether  
circumstances impell little Miss Lee to take on another tourist  
even as I am sometimes given a chance to nod positively  
or negatively, so little Miss Lee may do so without  
anyone ever being the wiser. She did say something about  
trying a show while in town but I imagine she will  
be pretty well engaged in pursuit of literary and  
artistic points that will consume most of her time.  
The J. H. and J. M. Henrys traveled to town tonight  
to have barbecue at Pat and Juanita B.'s home.  
A cousin of I. S. Willard, Camille McCain, nee Deblieur,  
died at the hospital of a heart trouble, about 7,  
and I. S. W. asked if I thought she should notify  
Celeste. I told her Celeste was at Pat's for supper  
and that under the circumstances, I thought it would  
be better to let that party rock along, leaving  
the news until tomorrow morning. I. S. W. agreed  
such a course might be better all around.  
After all, Camille's family are legend in number  
as are her friends and in view of the excitement that would  
be injected into the party at which J. H. was present, it  
seemed to me so much wiser to let the evening rock along  
as peacefully as possible.



10913

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One night this week I heard a book mentioned on the air and although I learned nothing about it, except the title, that was enough to quicken my curiosity, -- "American Painters in Paris". I know not if the author was speaking of a book already for the press or merely a manuscript on which he is working, -- and I don't recall the man's name although it sounded a bit French. I thought I would mention the matter, however, thinking you might have heard or read something about it. On the strength of the title, I mentioned it in my Cane River Memo for next week but merely mentioned it.

I am wondering, speaking of columns, if anyone will make anything out of the one that will appear in tomorrow's paper. I can even remember the title of the thing but there is some mention in it of Ana and the overseers. When I sat down to knock the thing off, I had in mind using the word, Ana, for the state of Louisiana, and the overseers being the politicians who are currently running the show. To capture the attention of the local readers, I started off with a reference to a family, notable for the number of children, being, in reality the Hertzogs of a generation back, but somehow the piece didn't pan out as I had anticipated and I believe there was some question in the editor's mind if the thing made any sense at all, and it probably didn't, especially in view of a couple of prolonged interruptions while I was trying to knock the darned thing off, a circumstance that always leaves me with doubts as to how the structure appears when read straight through. I really ought to do a column or two ahead and thus be able to run through one before sending it off but somehow that never seems to work out and so, if tomorrow's effort seems poorer than usual, I shall not be at all surprised.

We continue to marvel at this bend of the river that no swarms of birds have thus far descended upon us. Some of the cowboys who roam the Montrose hills tell me there are quite a few flocks of them in that quarter but, praise the Lord, they are not roosting here thus far and I hold the thought they may not. Forgive quite a dull letter. I shall attempt

10914

Thursday, December 29th, 1950.

Memorandum:

Drizzley all night and all day and still drizzling tonight. The night's news speaks of more snow in Lyme. Misere.....

I found lots of excuses for staying indoors and I suppose I did get some desk work done but I'm not much impressed by the amount accomplished.

Carmen called me this morning to tell me Camille McCane had died last night about 7. I didn't tell her I knew it a little after seven. She said she and her sister had gone down to Oakland where Lucille was giving a birthday party for Alphonse and that news of Camille's death had cast a pall over the festivities, what with Camille having been born a Deblier and the Deblier and Prudhomme families being much related by marriage.

Over the coffee cups this morning, Celeste asked me if I had heard of Camille's death. I responded affirmatively. She asked when I had heard. I lied and said I had just heard it from Carmen, -- true, in a way, but not entirely.

She said she and J. H. had just gone to bed when one of her girl friends in town called her the distressing news. I'm not sure I should be likely to think much of the imagination of a supposed friend who would knock me out of bed in the middle of the night to tell me about the death of someone about whose fate everybody in the house could just as well receive after a night's sleep rather than before one got a cat nap.

The weather continuing in the 40's, not to mention the protracted drizzle, plantation folks are evidently concentrating on household chores and at least some of them appear to be having fun. Once yesterday, once again today, first one friend and then another, each having



10915

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10915

butchered a hog, came to bring me results of their handiwork,  
one gift being of some mighty fine smelling head cheese,  
the other a whole paper sackful of cracklin's... For  
anyone vaguely dreaming about an effort at reducing,  
the fat constituting the sole ingredient of  
cracklin's isn't probably the best fare to indulge in  
with determination but samples are always nice to share with  
one's friends and Grandpa adores whatever leavings come  
his way can't remember if I mentioned the four railroad posters  
I. S. Willard sent me as a surprise Christmas present. About  
a month ago, I mentioned to her something about one  
someone had described to me as depicting the Galerie des Glaces  
which had been published two or three years ago. By  
an unexpected dab of legerdemain, I. S. Willard produced  
not only the Versailles poster but another of Sainte Chapelle,  
one of Place endome and one of Florence. I  
understand she had collected various posters from time to time over  
the years and I believe had them filed away  
in her Baton Rouge office and that these presented to me  
must have come from that collection. I am delighted  
to unroll them and gaze at them occasionally and I suppose  
I shall end up by installing them in the big old storage barn  
at the far end of the gourd garden where there is a  
gallery to the building, not unlike the Yucca gallery.

I have been thinking so much about your splendid account  
of "Tenderloin", "Camelot" and "Becket". You  
mentioned Henry 2nd and that reminded me that it was  
Eleanore of Aquitaine who first married Louis 7th and  
following their divorce, she married Henry 2nd. If  
memory serves, they lived in the 1100's. In  
the 1200's came Louis 9th, St. Louis, pretty much  
dominated all his life by his mother, Blanche of Castille, who,  
among other things, according to Henry Adams, got herself  
into permanent remembrance by figuring in the Chartres windows  
reading the Henry Adams opus, "Mont St. Michel et Chartres"  
in which these several ladies and gentlemen figure all too briefly

10916

10916

Friday, December 30th, 1950.

Memorandum:

A thin veil of clouds almost but not quite let  
the sun through today. It will rain tomorrow, it is  
said, and the temperature, in the 40's, will probably sag a little.

The J. M. Henrys decided to leave for Conroe this morning and  
will undoubtedly not take off before tomorrow afternoon. One  
thing is certain, they are still here tonight personally,  
I like having them about and wish they might remain another  
week. John Wenk is also here but probably will be going  
back to L. S. U. within a day or two.

Mr. Walker called me today to report one reaction to  
yesterday's column, "Ana and the White Monkey". He said  
a subscriber, a woman, came in the office this morning, sputtering  
that she had read the article through, making no sense out  
of it whatsoever and therefore had re-read it and then  
had rushed right over to the office to get a dozen extra copies  
she wanted to send to various people. It is assumed  
certain members of the Legislature are reading it, too, --assuming  
they can read, and if they can understand any of it, will  
not be liking it. They will have less difficulty comprehending  
the meaning of next week's effort and will like that one  
even less, I reckon.

I was glad to learn that Robina probably had a fine  
Christmas but I gather she was equally happy when back again  
at home. I can imagine a household built around teen-agers  
might be quite lively at any time but especially  
so at Christmas time and I shall readily understand  
if Robina should decide next year to make  
her trip to Winfield on New Years instead of Christmas,  
for while there might be just as much confusion, my guess  
is that it wouldn't be quite so concentrated. I  
suppose the opportunity to join with a maximum number  
of members of the family was one of the impelling forces  
that called for the Christmas visit and that I can quite  
readily understand so far as Robina is concerned but  
in so many cases I have known, it is more habit or custom  
than anything else.



31201

10917

Friday, December 30th, 1850

Memorandum

that he-stirs individuals to enter into the sanctum of the family circle at Christmas time and often they would do better to leave the various elements making up the family to join congenial friends rather than to attempt putting square pegs in round holes as so often seems to be the case in such reunions.

Two calls intervene between this paragraph and the above and each had something about the relationship of time to I. S. Willard. The first one was from Ann, telling of some party to which I. S. Willard, of whom Ann is very fond, was three and a half hours late in attending. I believe a dinner was involved or some such. And then I. S. Willard called and remarked she was weary of well doing, as she seems to be quite busy. Knowing her to have been an admirer of Camille McCakin, and that she had gone to the Rosary the night before, I casually asked her if she had attended the funeral this morning and she somewhat confusedly said:

"Oh.....err.....aaaahhhhhh... well, what I mean is that in a way I really did....err.....uh..... that is, I really did go although the service was over when I reached the church....."

In short, I. S. Willard is a sight. Sometime between now and dawning, I must cook up something by way of a birthday present for Aunt illie whose natal day is on the 4th and, to reach her in time, the greeting must go forward on the morrow. She forgot my birthday last Spring but there were some pretty handkerchiefs this Christmas. One thing I am going to resolve for the New Year is to find out something from the Weather Bureau. Tonight Shreveport announced it was raining and the humidity stood at 89. In a rain, I should think I would feel the humidity was at 100. Thus endeth 1850 so far as the memo is concerned although one more day remains on the calendar.....